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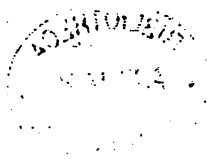
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ADDRESSES
TO
DISTRICT VISITORS
AND
SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

FRANCIS PIGOU, D.D.

ADDRESSES
TO
DISTRICT VISITORS AND SUNDAY
SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Ballantyne Press
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ADDRESSES
TO
DISTRICT VISITORS AND SUNDAY
SCHOOL TEACHERS.

BY THE
REV. FRANCIS PIGOU, D.D.
VICAR OF HALIFAX, RURAL DEAN,
CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HER MAJESTY.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY THE RIGHT REV. LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.



LONDON.
JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.
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DEDICATION.

TO

My District Visitors and other Lay Helpers

AT

HALIFAX, DONCASTER, AND ELSEWHERE,

IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION

OF

THEIR KIND, SELF-DENYING, AND VALUED SERVICES.



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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

A LENGTHENED preface will hardly be required of me. This little work will speak for itself, and tell, I hope, its own tale. I have often been asked, "How do you conduct your meetings of District Visitors? Do you not find it difficult to furnish material for discussion from month to month? Ought we not to make such meetings instructive, interesting, and devotional?"

To such queries as these, put to me by not a few loved fellow-workers in the ministry, this unpretending volume is intended to be in some sort a reply. The topics were suggested by the valued friend who has most kindly found time, in the midst of laborious duties, to write a few commendatory words, and such words will come with due weight from one of his large parochial experience. The "Addresses" are written on texts which he supplied, as published in that most valuable periodical, "The Clergyman's Magazine,"

under the head of "Notes for District Visitors' Meetings." So far from the Addresses being thought unworthy of perusal on this account, I cannot but hope that the real ground on which they may claim attention is, that they have been suggested and inspired by one who bears the honoured name of Thorold. I publish them as a souvenir for my own workers in the days that must come when our fellowship in work will be a thing of the past. I launch them from the dock of my study into the waters of Christian activity, not knowing into what harbour they may find their way. That District Visiting is a most valuable form of lay-agency none will doubt. Where should we be, and what should we do in our large parishes with their teeming populations, without our District Visitors? They are essential to the proper administration of a parish. And just in proportion as their help is valuable, and the clergy have to depend largely on their assistance, is it important for them to realise how great and golden is their opportunity. To this end our practice is, first, to transact all necessary business, such as receiving and paying of accounts which are sent in on the form appended to these Addresses. The alms are almost entirely dispensed by the District Visitors, a certain grant being made to each. The accounts settled, the list of sick visited during the

month is read, so as to refresh the memory. Anything of interest during the coming month is communicated, and about half an hour is thus occupied. We proceed to sing a hymn and to prayer, and having selected a portion of Scripture, a short address is given, and discussion is invited and encouraged.

No one can be more aware than myself of the obvious defects and shortcomings of the following Addresses. Whoever cares to look into them must kindly remember that brevity is not to be lost sight of, and I have endeavoured to bear in mind not only the English proverb, "Brevity is the soul of wit," but the Persian proverb also, which says, "Blessed is he who speaketh brief words, for he shall be asked to speak again." If these Addresses, with all their shortcomings, be in any degree helpful to others engaged in the same ministerial work, I shall have attained the object which prompts me to let them appear in print. One who afterwards himself became a great painter asked of his master if he might mix the colours for him. He replied that he could not do that. He then asked if he might hold the brush for him,—that he was allowed to do. I shall rejoice if this little volume be a humble contribution to lighten the labours of those who know well what are the toils of the ministry in the same

place from year to year. I shall be abundantly rewarded for any time or thought it may have cost myself, in the midst of incessant parochial work, if, within these pages, any who know the constant strain on the mind find anything worth repeating, and worth giving to others.

INTRODUCTION

BY THE

RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

A PAROCHIAL clergyman, pleasantly sceptical about the practical value of "district visiting," and tempted to regard the visits of gentlewomen among the poor as the mild purring of a perhaps inoffensive goodness, may be disposed after reading this book to turn the tables on his own supineness, and frankly to consider if he has been at much pains either to inform himself or to qualify his friends about the work the Church requires. For an ordinary "District Visitors' meeting" is apt to be much more of a dry ceremony than an instructive function, and, withal, uncommonly dull. A couple of Collects, possibly a passage of Scripture, with or without an exposition bearing or not bearing on the subject; what are called "a few plain remarks," too often a discursive and unpre-

meditated chatter on things in general and the parish in particular, the careful doling out of relief tickets with the usual caution about discreetness in distributing them—the blessing, and then the meeting is done! Is it strange that such *jejune* if not austere refreshment proves no great incentive to a work which is only useful so far as it is steady, and which, for all its discouragements and disappointments, needs exact information, sagacious counsel, and devout sympathy? If, further, as I know it to be sometimes the case, the district visitors are strictly cautioned against “invading the province of the clergy” by anything like religious instruction or spiritual guidance, those who are the most deeply in earnest, and, therefore, the most worth having and using, find themselves unhappily mulcted of the one aim which gives the work they try to do its chief dignity and compensation; and while glad to be the almoners of temporal bounty, on the threshold that separates the two worlds, they are bidden to halt, as if their tread had a profaneness in it; and to sorrowful and awed consciences, looking wondrously towards the dark curtain that shuts out the secrets of the invisible world, they may not pour out their hearts about that blessed and patient Redeemer Who is ever mighty and willing to save.

He who thinks it so easy to visit the poor that

help towards making visits profitable can be dispensed with, has either never really tried it, or must be wonderfully in conceit with his own performances. He who does not think it much matters whether the poor are visited or not, should read the closing sentences of our Lord's parable of the Last Judgment, and consider St. James's definition of what was "pure and undefiled religion" in the Apostolic time. To be kind without an air of patronage, to be interested in their small affairs, and talk and ask about them without compelling the suspicion of an ill-bred intrusiveness; to discover real necessity, and to detect cringing selfishness; to be compassionate, yet not as an orange to be sucked dry; to be bountiful, yet so to dispense alms as to stir exertion and not pamper laziness; to talk pleasantly and naturally, also to know when not to talk, but to go away; to cover in our sympathy and counsel the entire surface of life, and not only a part of it; when we leave, to deserve to be wished for again, and to be missed if we do not go, and not so much for our gifts as for our company; best of all, to leave behind us not what has been quaintly called "the taste of a dose of physic, griping and worriting, and doing no good," but the sunshine of a bright face, the seed of an eternal thought, the happy presence of one who so truly and tenderly spoke for God that

His voice seemed to linger in the room for hours afterwards—here is the ideal of a district visitor, such as some of us have had the happiness of knowing personally, and many of whom the Church hides within her heart ; but to deserve them we must educate them, and to keep them at the level of their duty we must take pains.

What is most wanted to make the visitation of the poor edifying is intelligence, and sympathy, and grace. They are all within our grasp, but, like other good things, they will not come merely for being wished for ; they are for those who secure them by earning them.

There should be intelligence, which is not only an original quality of the mind, but the continuous result and reward of the constant and diligent improvement of it, in collecting information, and retaining it by digesting it, and putting it out to usury in that best of educators—conversation. Let them talk of health, children, school, passing events, temperance, thrift, a clean home, cooking, nursing, the innocent counteractions to the public-house in comfort and welcome ; and then the graver and deeper things beyond, of religion, and Sunday, and the house of God, and the Holy Table ; with the tact which is quite as much moral as intellectual ; and the good sense which simply means the instinct that discerns the right proportion of things and

their relation to each other ; and the careful thinking that takes trouble to approach the citadel of the conscience in the right way, and avoids putting the sentinel on his guard, by letting him see too soon what you are driving at. All these are immense helps ; and not only born, but made.

Then let them have sympathy, which by a kind of intuition convinces those whom they visit that they come, not to amuse themselves nor inform themselves, nor (as their husbands might perhaps put it) to air their own opinions, but because they honestly care for them, and recognise their kinship with them, and wish to share their blessings with them, and to be a family friend to them—this is the natural heat that thaws the arctic cold of social separation, that links class to class, and bridges with filled hands and kind looks a human chasm wider than the Atlantic sea.

Also let them ask for grace, supernatural aid for a supernatural effort, the power and presence of the Spirit of God with their lips when they speak, and on human hearts when they listen, earnestly craved before they go, and as earnestly trusted about when they return home, which works subtilely and in the dark, and as it pleases Him Who bestows it, and according to the inevitable laws of His eternal righteousness, but ever “effectually in them that believe.”

These addresses of an eminent clergyman, whose varied experience in large parishes is equalled only by his readiness to impart it to those beyond his borders, I heartily commend to all who would make the Church's work among the poor, by the hands of her devout daughters, solid, vital, and lasting. With all my mind I believe in the value of "district visiting," when it is done as it ought to be done. And with all my heart I ask God's blessing on this substantial contribution to its higher efficiency, not without thankful memories, tinged with a happy sadness, of the help I have myself received during past times, and for more retired labours from the indefatigable help of most dear friends, who in the nineteenth century of the Church's life reproduce the Apostolic description in the first, while they deserve the commendation it implies—

"A succourer of many, and of myself also."

" Oh, lead me oft to huts where poor men lie,
Not in the hope fantastical to find
That Innocence, from palaces exiled,
Has taken refuge under sordid roofs,
But knowing what of evil, what of good,
Is to be looked for there, and with firm faith,
That for the eye, made wise by charity,
Much good will there, as everywhere, be found—
Patience by lengthened suffering not outworn,

Promptness to aid in one another's needs,
With self-denial ; yea, heroic acts,
The more heroic as not knowing themselves
For such at all ; and there not seldom too
Such thankfulness for small things, such content
Under the absence of most earthly good—
These schools of wisdom make me to frequent
That I may learn what is not learned elsewhere."

—*Archbishop Trench.*

A. W. ROFFEN.

SELSDON PARK,
31st December 1879.

ADDRESSES

TO

DISTRICT VISITORS AND SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

THE GREAT MOTIVE.

“Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia ; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves. Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.”—2 Cor. viii. 1-5.

THE Apostle St. Paul alludes in these verses to the liberal collection which had been subscribed by the churches of Macedonia on behalf of poorer brethren in Christ dwelling in Jerusalem. He seeks to stir up the Corinthians to imitate the example of liberality thus set them by the churches

A 4

of Macedonia ; a liberality the more commendable in that they gave generously out of their deep poverty. Like the widow, whom our Lord commended, they gave of their want ; and as five loaves, blessed of Christ, were multiplied to the feeding of five thousand in the desert, so it was with this contribution, "their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." Their little was made more and much. It is not the munificence or largeness of the gift which the Apostle commends, it is the spirit in which it was given which made the gift munificent ; above all, the *motive* from which the churches of Macedonia contributed, sanctified and enriched the gift. "*They first gave their own selves to the Lord.*"

The entire passage I have selected bears so strictly upon some aspects of our modern parochial work in the varied ministrations and different agencies by which that work is carried out, that you will see its suitableness as a subject of meditation on this New Year's Day, when we, Clergy and Laymen, are met together, as we should meet, for prayer, words of counsel, and Holy Communion. And before I go on to speak to you on that which the selected passage of Scripture suggests, I would take this opportunity of heartily thanking you, in my own name and that of my brother Clergy, for the willing help you have rendered us in the year

past, and for the promise, God willing, of that same help throughout the year on which we to-day enter.

The example of the churches of Macedonia sets before us very clearly *the motive*—the one great, grand motive—which Clergy, Visitors, Teachers should individually keep in view, a motive, not only the very highest from which to labour, but the only motive which God will recognise. That motive is thus expressed, “First gave their own selves to the Lord.” Let me here remind you that the *motives*, from which work for God—for of that work I am now particularly speaking—is taken up, shared, and in any measure done, are various. At first sight this may not appear possible. Unless we go down to the root of the matter, and conscientiously question our individual selves as to our personal motive, we may not have so much as a suspicion that the *motive* from which we exercise our sacred calling, visit in a district, teach in a school, is not the highest. In the first place, the nature of the work in which we are engaged is such that to participate in it would seem to be a guarantee of the motive. The ministry is in itself so sacred; visiting in a district so savours of religion; teaching in a Sunday school is such a handling of the Word of God, that at first sight it would be hardly credible that any one would

voluntarily enter upon and undertake these "good works" from any motive save one. Why should they? We will together look more closely into this. There seem to me to be four main reasons, each and all short of the true, four lower motives from which it is possible, without perhaps suspecting it, that persons either offer to do God's work in a parish or actually and actively engage in it.

The first and lowest of these is *natural activity*, by which I mean that activity of mind and body which is natural instinct, which is essentially constitutional, and has nothing spiritual in it. There is in most persons a fund of vital energy which, as Bain in his work on the Senses and Intellect points out, is to be distinguished from the activity awakened by sensation or emotion. When a rider, he says, speaks of his horse as "fresh," he implies that the natural activity is undischarged and pressing for vent. The very necessity for bodily exercise is a proof of the existence of this fund of energy. It must, in some form or other, find vent; it must "be worked off." Now this is purely, strictly animal, and, as I have already said, has nothing spiritual about it. To persons of a naturally active mind and restless temperament idleness is sheer misery. They must be doing something. There must be some object on which

they can expend their superfluous energy. They live, it may so be, in a town where there is not much variety, nor much room for creating occupations for themselves. They are connected with a parish, aware of its organisation and opportunities, and they either offer their services, or are persuaded to give them. The district or school, or some charitable institution, affords a vent on which energy of mind and activity of body may satisfactorily expend itself. May not all this be without at the same time "doing God service"?

Again. There may be the *consciousness of leisure*, and the reason which this supplies for engaging in parochial work is akin to that of which I have thus far been speaking. A very large proportion of persons are so circumstanced in life that they have much time at their command. They have no trade, business, profession, or particular pursuit in life. There are twelve working hours in the day for them to do with much as they please. This is especially the case with women, who are not called to do the work to which man is by nature more fitted and equal. Allowing for dressing and undressing, for meals and exercise, for attention to necessary household duties and needful repose, they find that there are gaps of time to be filled up in the day; intervals between meals to be bridged over in some way or other; time to be employed

or killed. Work in a parish offers itself to such as these; it takes their fancy, may be made to suit their convenience, does not involve any actual self-sacrifice, and helps to while away the day. Is it not so that there may be little or no thought of God in this? that the work is done because there happens to be spare time?

Again, and in some respects, in advance of the two preceding, *a desire of usefulness* is another motive in the same direction. I think it is higher than the two preceding, in this sense, that the very desire of usefulness tacitly implies the recognition of this fact, that there is something in every life which is owed to God. It implies the consciousness of certain aptitudes and gifts within us, and of opportunities without us, which exist in order that they may be brought together. We feel that we have the power to benefit others; that we each one have something which another has not; we get to the border-line of duty. We in some measure catch and become infected with the busy, restless, working spirit of the age. With no very definite object, or from anything but a vague, undefined desire of usefulness, we take up work. It interests us throughout the day. We are conscious that our time is at least being profitably spent, that it is not positively wasted; and when the day comes to an end we can look back upon it with some

degree of calm satisfaction. We have not been standing idle in the market-place. We have been about, active, stirring, benefiting others—useful, as we say, in our generation. Now, although in the desire of usefulness there is to some extent the recognition of God, can we say that work done from this motive *only* is work done with a single eye to God's glory? Is it done from the highest motive?

There remains yet a fourth motive to be analysed, I mean the *sense of duty*. I take this to be the highest state to which the natural man can attain. It is elevating, bracing, and inspiring. It carries many a man through difficulties which without a strong sense of duty he could not face. It makes him fearless of danger, brave, persevering, one on whom you can rely, but it is essentially a motive of a *moral*, not of a spiritual nature. History is thickly studded with shining illustrations of the sacrifices made for duty's sake; of lives actuated by it, which all have respected and admired; of heroic conduct it has inspired; of death faced with a calmness and fortitude nothing short of sublime. But is this the *highest* motive of human conduct? Did not this same sense of duty inspire individual heroes to noble deeds and generous sacrifices and glorious deaths in the ages before the world looked upon Christ? Is it not conceivable that there may

be little or no reference to God's appointment, to God's will, and to God's service in what is done *simply* from a sense of duty? And if this be so with that motive, which is the highest to which the natural man attains, how much more true must it be of motives lower down the scale?

Consider, again, how *imperfect* all these motives are, not simply because all we do is more or less imperfect, but imperfect because *not done in and from a right spirit*. And that imperfection must, sooner or later, become felt and manifest in a way which will best explain what I mean. In the first place, on no one of these motives can you safely rely for *perseverance* in well-doing. You are not secure against temptation to lukewarmness, to weariness, to that disgust which comes of disappointment and apparent failure. If, for instance, you take up some work in a parish merely because of natural activity, or a consciousness of leisure, are you so sure of yourself that you can say that, were something to offer itself more congenial to your tastes, more attractive to your mind, and bringing with it more of gratification, you would not give up the one for the other, the work for the pleasure? And if the object be to fill up time, would not the natural man consult his inclinations first, and give rein to their gratification? In other words, if he had the opportunity, would he

forego personal predilection for the sake of the work he undertook from apparently a right motive? Have you never yourself observed how the temptation of a worldly amusement or excitement has kept a clergyman or visitor or teacher from the parish, the district, the class which has the first claim on their time? In the same way, again, work undertaken from the desire to be usefully employed is exposed to temptation and the severe strain of test of principle. Even a strong sense of duty is not proof against the trial of disappointment. To visit in a district, to teach little children day by day, has nothing of excitement in it; there seems to be little or no solid result, nothing to gratify, nothing to encourage and cheer us on. Hence one says, "I must give up my district;" another, "I think I must discontinue teaching in the Sunday school." Why should one or the other be discontinued? Because you meet with disappointment? because the poor are ungrateful? because children remain dull and uninteresting? because of the trial to patience, and the general, indefinable sense of weariness and disgust? Is this the reason? May there not be much of self and self-seeking in all this? Will not this be the very mark of the imperfection best accounted for because the motive falls short of the true?

I do not say that we are never to encourage any

one to work in a parish or to accept their services who does not undertake it from the highest motive. I would forbid or exclude none who are willing to give time and toil, because once drawn into the service of Christ, once caught in the net, once engaged in His work, we may hope that they will be led on to higher motives. I should say, "By all means, take a district; by all means, take a class in our Sunday schools; by all means, interest yourself in some charitable institution;" but this I would add, as our Master says, "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect;" so set distinctly, definitely set before yourself, the motive of motives; even that which characterised the workers of the churches of Macedonia—

"First gave their own selves unto the Lord."

Now what are we to understand by this? It means a dedication of the whole man, body, soul, and spirit, the sacrifice of the entire self to and in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. This dedication of self precedes work done for Christ. Mark the rule and order. It is not first working for Christ and after that self-dedication, but, if we are to work *truly*, we must first have given ourselves to the Lord. In what sense have given ourselves to the Lord? I answer in a sense which is of inward feeling, of conscious self-dedication;—not mere lip-service; not mere outward communion and

professed devotion ; not Church Membership or participation in religious work ; but it is the surrender of the heart, of all we have and all we are, to His service. And what again must precede that ? I do not hesitate to answer, that conversion must precede it. To give ourselves to the Lord presupposes that we have a true, vivid apprehension of our state and condition by-nature ; that we are out of Christ, lost and perishing sinners, destitute of righteousness, abiding under the wrath of God, not reconciled children, not adopted into His family by grace. Until we see, and confess, and feel this, we shall never give ourselves to the Lord, to be saved by Him—to serve Him. Now it is the special work of the Spirit to convince us of sin, to show us what we really are by nature, to humble our pride of heart, to break down within us all thought of personal merit, to dispel every false hope of salvation on which we may be resting, and to lead us to Christ. The Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us, and one of the unfailing, unmistakable signs of true conversion, as well as of the work of the Spirit, is this, so to teach us of Jesus that we see in Him our propitiation, our atonement, our gracious, loving Saviour. At the first discovery of His love, we marvel ; by degrees we come to understand how infinite, how undeserved that love is, in dying for us, and so

loving us as to give Himself for us,—and this once felt, once revealed by the teaching of the Spirit, once a matter of inward, personal experience and joy, you feel that you can never love Him sufficiently for all His love toward yourself ; your whole heart moves toward Him, as ocean tides follow the attraction of the constraining planet ; you are drawn towards Him with the cords of love. The love of Christ constrains us, “ We love Him because He first loved us.” You say to yourself, “ How great this love ! how amazing ! how Divine ! how undeserved ! How can I show forth my sense of it ? How can I reciprocate it ? What can I do to prove my gratitude to Him who has saved my soul from death eternal ? I will consecrate my life, my powers, my time, my opportunities to His service. I will serve Him with the best member that I have. All I do shall be done for Him, because of what He has done for me. I see how precious a soul is to Him by His saving mine. I will try and win souls to Him. I will work, and watch, and pray for souls. Henceforth to me to live is Christ.”

This, you see, is a *new* motive. It is altogether *another* motive. It is the highest, we must add it is the *only*, motive which will bear the strain of trial and the test of temptation. It alone will meet with recognition and approval hereafter.

There is one remarkable passage in Scripture which ought to suggest and enforce a personal sifting of our motives. The words are the words of our Saviour. They speak for themselves. "Many will say unto Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you." Now what does this clearly and solemnly teach. Nothing less than this, that there may be apparent zeal and devotion; that we may preach to others in Christ's name; that we may visit the sick in His name; that we may teach the little ones of His flock, and that our ministry, our work, shall be blessed to souls and overruled to the spiritual good of others, and yet that we ourselves, who have ministered, may not be acknowledged or accepted in the great judgment-day. I think this is a most solemn fact revealed in God's Word. And why is it possible that having preached or ministered to others, we ourselves may be "cast away"? Because at bottom of all our ministry and all our works, there has not been underlying and inspiring that work the acceptable motive. We have not worked *from* life, but we have worked *for* life; not from salvation, but for salvation; not from the constraining love of Christ,

but from motives which will not bear looking into on the last great day of account.

Let me go further, and say it to you as I say it to myself, this is the only motive which will secure us effectually against those temptations to growing "weary in well doing," of which I have already spoken. I do not say that, like Elijah, we shall not have our hours of depression and despondency. We must look for these. I do not say that we shall not experience trials, hindrances, drawbacks, discouragements, and apparent failure, but the more we work truly for Christ, and the more He by His Spirit works in and with us, the more will His grace and strength be ours in which to persevere. We shall not know that kind of disappointment which is of our own creating. We shall look less for those results which rest with Him, and not with us His instruments ; our work will be more sanctified by prayer ; it will be done more in faith and in humble reliance upon God for needful help. There will be nothing of self in it, no self-seeking, no vainglory, no doing it for the sake of the occupation it brings to the unoccupied mind, or the filling up it may afford of leisure, or the satisfying the desire of usefulness, or the mere approval of conscience which tells us we have done our duty. No. It will be done from a motive as pure as anything in this world can ever be, as free as pos-

sible from alloy, even in harmony and accordance with His mind whose meat and drink it was to do His Father's will.

And then, because of the grace and strength that will be imparted to you, your apparently feeble efforts will be used and largely blessed to the good of others. Your poverty will become riches. A spirit-taught, spirit-quickenened mind will speak with a new tongue. You will visit in a more true, devoted, unflagging spirit. You will not teach without prayer that you yourself may be taught from on high. Your teaching will be more scriptural, more simple, more from the heart to the heart. You will never go into your district, you will never take your class, without Christ your Lord and Master being present with you, by His abiding Spirit to encourage, embolden, empower you, and so to bless what you do for Him in His name, that you will never know what it is to grow weary in His service.

I have set this before you, my district visitors and school teachers, this the highest motive from which you should work, not because I would have you suppose that I think you are not working from it, but first in order that you may examine your own heart, as I often examine mine, and next, to encourage and cheer you on in view of the New Year on which you are entering.

Suppose that any one of you here present, when you come to take the candle and to search out your heart, is compelled, by the force of honest conviction of which you cannot rid yourself, to confess that the highest is not your motive, that you have never viewed the matter in this light, or would not have undertaken work had it been thus seriously placed before you; suppose if what I have been saying be scriptural and true, that you yourself have never realised it, what then? Will you throw up your district? Will you give up your class? Will you at once withdraw your name, your interest, your presence from anything to which it has hitherto been gladly given? God forbid you should make such a resolve. For this were worse. You are not your own. You are bought with a price. Your life is not yours to do with as you please. Your time is lent you of God. His will is that you should live to Him and for Him. The example of Christ was, as at this time, given, exhibited to the world to show of what human life, sanctified of the Holy Ghost, is capable. That life is to be reproduced in our own. Rather than resolve that you will work in His cause no more, make that surrender of your heart to Him which will make you His. Why not? What keeps you back from doing so? What do you fear? Is it not the highest service, the service

of angels and archangels? What are you not losing, what are you not imperilling, if you say to yourself, "No, I will not, I cannot yet give myself to the Lord"? Once give yourself, and you will then know its blessedness, its rest, its strength. Once His by faith, and you would never wish to be of the world again, as you would never desire to bring back to this earth of ours those who have overcome death and tasted heaven. Why should you not to-day, on this New Year's Day, give yourself to the Lord? Why should you not say, "Behold me, loving Lord God! Thou knowest that my desire is toward Thee. Reveal Thy Son Jesus Christ in me. Give, oh, give me the blessed and blessing gift of the Holy Ghost. Thou Lord and Giver of Life, take of the things of Christ and show them to me; that I may know Him that is true; that I may so feel His love in dying for me, that that love may constrain me to live every year that I am spared to Him and for Him; and that, thus united with Him by faith, I may receive out of His fulness, and may be fruitful in every good work." Why should not this be your New Year's prayer? If you value your immortal soul, if you believe in the power of prayer, you will thus pray. If you wish that your work should be accepted of God in Christ, you must thus pray; and seeking,

you will surely find and be found of Him, to your joy, your peace, and your strength.

This New Year's Day should be to such as have already given themselves unto the Lord the occasion and opportunity of a renewed dedication of yourselves. Be this your New Year thought and New Year gift. Present the year with it that it may be to your life as keynote to strain. Say to yourself, "Here am I, Lord. Look upon me in the face of Thine Anointed. Strengthen me to labour more faithfully for Thee. Empower me, energise me, bless me." And in the Holy Communion you again can say, "Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee." There Christ will manifest Himself to you in the breaking of bread. There He will strengthen and refresh your soul as our bodies are by bread and wine; and entering on the New Year in this spirit, facing it with these purposes, endued with needful grace, it cannot but be, if spared to see its close, a year of abundant blessing to your own soul, a year of abundant blessing to others. If you should not be spared to see its close, God grant that you may not be found unprepared when the Bridegroom comes, but, with loins girded and lamps burning, may enter in with Him into endless rest! AMEN.

CONSECRATION HYMN.

"Yea, let Him take ALL."

—2 SAM. xix. 30.

TAKE my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

Take my moments and my days ;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and "beautiful" for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.

Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold ;
Not a mite would I withhold.

Take my intellect, and use
Every power as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine ;
It shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart, it *is* Thine own ;
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love ; my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure-store.

Take myself, and I will be
Ever, *only*, ALL for Thee.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

A NEW YEAR ADDRESS.

“ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine ; no more can ye except ye abide in Me. I am the vine ; ye are the branches.”—ST. JOHN xv. 4, 5.

How beautiful, how true to fact, is this exquisite simile ! What plant could well be selected as a more faithful, significant emblem of the union of Christ with believers in Him ? Stock and stem unsightly, of little or no value independently of fruit, how vigorous is the growth of a vine ! how graceful its luxuriant foliage ! the fragrance of its blossoms how sweet ! how exquisite the symmetry of its clustered fruit ! how generous its reviving strength ! The Vine is the most graceful of all plants. Every leaf in its shape, venation, colouring, together with the perfection of form centred in one object presents to the artist's eye a model of beauty ; a beauty, moreover, quiet and unobtrusive. The early history of the vine is involved in obscurity. It would appear, like the cereal plants, to be coeval with, not antecedent to, the human era. It was planted, so say the Jews, by God's

own hand, on the fertile slopes of Hebron. In its extensive diffusion, gradual distribution over the surface of the globe, and intimate association with the human race, what plant, save perhaps that of wheat, affords a more fitting and appropriate image of the origin and diffusion of the Church of Christ? This image our Lord presses into the service of the sacred language of figure; a figure already familiar to the Jewish mind from Old Testament usage. It was part of the prophetic phraseology of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea. And our Lord applies it to Himself; He in virtue of His human nature being to the world a vine, the root and stem of a new, fruit-bearing life. The beauty and truthfulness of this simile will be still further felt and appreciated in the light which recent researches in vegetable physiology throw upon it. So far from true is it that Science and Revelation are at discord, for does not Nature always most strikingly illustrate and confirm Scripture truth? A theory has recently been established which enhances the significance of this simile of the Vine, and with great beauty illustrates the *nature* of the union between Christ and believers. This theory—I quote the words of a well-known writer*—proceeds on the assumption that all plants, without exception, are strictly *annual*. A tree is

* "Bible Teachings in Nature." Macmillan.

generally supposed to be a single plant; only not like other plants, fading in autumn, and possessed of perennial growth. The common idea is that it is an *individual*, having the same kind of *individuality*, or personality, as a man, the root, trunk, branches, leaves, blossoms, being component parts of one and the selfsame plant, just as the body, limbs, and various organs are component parts of one and the selfsame human being. Recent scientific researches show a tree to be, not a single plant, but "an aggregate of individuals, a body corporate;" the idea involved in a genealogical tree being precisely that involved in a natural tree; the former consisting of living and dead persons, the latter of living and dead plants. Each tree, in fact, is "a collection of living and growing, but separate and distinct plants, the product of the current year, and likewise of the dead remains of a still larger number of individual plants of the same kind in species, the production of a series of bygone years." Bear with me for a moment in my endeavour to set before you the force of our Lord's simile, read in this light.

Each season new shoots or annual plants spring up from the buds which crown the old ones; these are the only living parts of the tree. Each season, at the close of the year, these shoots or annual plants, having fulfilled the purposes of their exist-

ence, die, but though dead they escape decomposition, owing to the roots of the new buds with which they are tipped growing over them, enclosing them on every side. They are thus hermetically encased in the tree, they serve to increase its size, the living growing, as it were, upon the dead, the dead still incorporated in the living, and like a cluster of coral, living and dead are built up into one compact, corporate organisation.

How beautiful, how appropriate, a type of the mystical body of Christ; of that corporate body composed of *all* who have ever been united to Him by "lively faith," as the living Head! The sacred Vine is a unity, though made up of countless separate plants. The spiritual body is one, "Ye are all one body in Christ." The union between Christ and His people is intimate and close, each member retaining his proper personality. Individual believers are mortal and perishing, but still they are in Him immortal and perennial. Those you have loved and lost, who were wont to come to this house of God as you have come, whose presence, voice, companionship, love, you to-day are missing, if they departed this life in God's faith and fear, if they died and fell asleep in Jesus, are in Him *now*, dead and yet alive. They have passed out of your sight and ken, but they are sure and safe in His holy keeping. Rest yourself on that thought

concerning them. New seed is ever springing up, a new generation of believers. The old perishes, and yet perishes not; for all are inseparably one in Christ Jesus. "I am the Vine—ye are the branches."

And what must follow upon this? *Mutual resemblance*, where that union subsists. Nothing is more remarkable than the resemblance which exists between all the parts of the vine. This holds true of the minor parts, such as the leaf, flowers, fruit, seed. Throughout these, under modified conditions and varied aspects, a striking resemblance prevails. As the experience of believers is of the same kind, though variously evidenced, so there is a likeness which every true believer, even the weakest, bears to Christ. They have features of resemblance which cannot well be simulated or mistaken. They are more or less types of the Divine Original; "He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all one." And one other result of this union is that of which I shall presently more particularly speak, and that is *fruitfulness*. Fruit as the sign of life; fruit as the evidence of an abiding in Christ, and Christ abiding in us.

"Abiding." Our Lord says, "*Abide* in Me." "*Abide* in Me." Why *abide* in Me? Can we cease to be in Him? Intimate as this union is, or may be, is it possible that a branch may die, or

a living tree may droop, fade, wither, and perish? Have you not often seen a *dead* branch holding on to a *living* tree? Have you not seen the sapless bough, the dry and unnourished leaf, with vigorous shoots and healthy foliage all around it? Even so may it be with one grafted into Christ, and yet not *abiding* in Christ. By Baptism we have all been grafted on or into Christ. We were in Baptism made "members of Christ;" branches of the Vine, not only in the restricted sense, limiting as some would limit that grafting to our conversion, we being then for the first time grafted when faith was first *consciously* exercised, but grafted *unconsciously* when as infants we were made "members of Christ." As all nations of men have sprung from the one blood of the first Adam, so now there is a fellowship with the second Adam, which is brought about by the preventing or "prevenient," grace of Baptism, the germ of regeneration and of growth being then and there implanted. If this were not so; if we could not believe what our Church also teaches, what meaning are we, theoretically, to attach to the idea of a *dead branch in a living Vine*, for a branch *becomes* dead, it does not *grow up* dead? It has once formed part of the life of the living tree. Before it died it had a life which could decay. And if there be no such grafting into Christ at Baptism, as part of the sacramental grace

and covenant, would not the exhortation, "Abide in Me," be robbed of much of its meaning? There is an "abiding" in Christ over, above, beyond mere grafting on and in Him; there is a deepening appropriation of His grace by faith which in sustained, continual, mutual influence results from holiness to holiness.

And this "abiding in Me" is the secret of *sanctification*, distinct from *regeneration*, distinct from *conversion*. Regeneration by water and the Spirit; Conversion, the turning of the heart to the Lord, these are distinct acts, done once and for all. *Sanctification is a life work*. Until we are converted there cannot be sanctification, therefore to represent *conversion* as the life work is to confuse it with sanctification. The one is more or less an instantaneous, conscious, definite act, by which, as wrought upon by the Holy Ghost, we surrender the heart to Christ; the other is a *gradual, progressive* work of the same Spirit, as all growth is gradual and progressive. Sanctification—growth in grace, this is what we have to aim after and attain. This we attain only as we *abide* in Jesus. Holiness is not an achievement, mastered at length by a variety of religious exercises, prayers, fastings, meditations, almsdeeds, self-discipline, sacraments, and when mastered a sort of permanent acquisition which goes on increasing as the stock of these spiritual

exercises accumulates. It is a momentary receiving out of Christ's fulness ; grace for grace. Faith is not Christ. Sacraments are not Christ. Faith is the means by which the grace of Christ is appropriated, and holiness is the result of His inworking by the Spirit in a heart which, having once surrendered itself to Him, frequently exercises the same trust, and keeps open—as you keep a window open, that the air of heaven may enter—keeps open the channels of communication between itself and the Source of all holiness. To advance, therefore, as you and I should consciously be advancing, year by year, in grace and holiness, there must be with us, as there is between a healthy branch and the Vine, a constant keeping open of the avenues of the soul toward Him. “Abide in Me ;” “Continue ye in My love.”

And this exhibits to us the value, the real value of ordinances. What are means of grace to a soul dead in trespasses and sins ? How can there be *growth* where there is not *life* ? If the soul is not cleaving to Christ, as branch cleaves to tree, how can He communicate Himself to that soul ? The “mean” is all outside the man himself—it is only made or becomes efficacious by “lively faith,” and where *that* faith is not, what value does the “mean” intrinsically possess ? May there not be a receiving of the Lord's Supper from a mere sense of duty

and obligation, without any real act of remembrance, a remembrance which implies *realisation* as well as *appropriation* of a Saviour's love, and may there not be a partaking of it which, if analysed, is little more than a superstitious act, as if some charm were to be wrought, or some grace communicated, solely by virtue of the outward ordained means? *The* end of the Lord's Supper is the strengthening and refreshing of our souls, as our bodies are by bread and wine; and that strengthening and refreshing is ours only as we *abide* in Christ.

How, again, cannot that soul but starve, sicken, dwindle down and die, which, having been grafted into the body of Christ's Church, and, it may be, quickened, for any one of various reasons contents itself with an occasional, infrequent, perfunctory use of appointed means of grace, as if its life could be sustained independently of the grace of Christ, or as if it had a spiritual life independent of Him; that does not seem to miss the privileges or to value the opportunities of the house of prayer; that allows an excuse to prevail to keep it from the house of God which would not be allowed to keep it from business, the counter, or trade; that breaks a Sabbath without compunction, and neglects prayer without a qualm? The soul *must*, cannot but starve and die, which either contents itself with the *use*, as distinct from the *believing* use, of

means of grace, or thinks and acts as if it could afford to live independently of appointed ordinances. We grow in grace, we advance in holiness, the work of sanctification progresses as we perseveringly exercise that faith by which the good work was first begun, and which, as we exercise it, He who begun will also perfect. *Abiding* in Christ is necessary to *sanctification*.

Again—this abiding in Christ is *the secret of fruitfulness*; of fruitfulness as distinct from the mere fruitless *profession* of Christianity, or mere outward adhesion to the Christian system, or formal acceptance of Christian doctrine. The vine is cultivated not for its wood, nor for its graceful foliage; it is cultivated with care for the sake of its *fruit*. Our Lord did not content Himself with simply enunciating truth. He *lived* out the truth He taught. What more fruitful life than this? What life more blessed and full of blessing? His meat and drink it was to *do* His Father's will. And as the Vine so must the branches be. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." We have no life independent of Christ, no more than the flower has colour, apart from the sun which paints its delicate and varied hues. We are fruitful Christians only as we abide in Jesus. Fruitful, one after this manner, another after that manner: not all alike,

but all according to their gifts, aptitudes, opportunities. The sap circulates through branch and stem, through leaf and berry ; giving to each its nourishment, strength, grace, and sweetness. In some fruitfulness is manifested *passively* ; in the development and exhibition of *graces* of the Spirit, in "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." In nature have you not the modest violet, the lowly lily, with their sweetness to delight, as well as the waving corn to sustain ? This mere passive evidence of fruitfulness is as real, valuable, and true as the more active phase of usefulness in the world. You may be shut out from or be unfitted for larger opportunities of glorifying God ; the condition and circumstances of your life may be such as not to leave much room or scope for active usefulness, but you have a sphere within your own home, within the immediate circle of relatives, acquaintance, neighbours, friends, a sphere with its own opportunities, within which you may really glorify God. Be content with that. Be content, if other opportunities be denied you, to evidence forth the *graces* of the Spirit, in the lesser world that is near and close upon you :—

"Nor serve we only when we gird
Our hearts for special ministry :
That creature best has ministered
Which is what it was meant to be."

And if your influence is to be for *good*, remember that you need something more than mere amiability, integrity, moral worth, and recommendations; there are the higher and nobler *spiritual* qualities, which are the fruit of the Spirit's *sanctifying power*, the result of that abiding in Christ by which His Spirit is continually imparted to make us abound in every good work and word.

This abiding in Christ is also the secret of *successful prayer*. "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." Why so? Because as the Spirit of Christ is given us, we are taught by the Holy Ghost *how* to pray, *what* to ask for. Such prayers are, "according to the will of God," because *inspired*, inspired by that Spirit which helpeth our infirmities; and "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit." Very different all this from untaught, undisciplined, *uninspired* prayer! I say, advisedly, *uninspired* prayer. Why are so many lives unblest, so many hearts unchanged, so many souls unawakened even amongst those who are not unused to or infrequent in prayer? Is it not because they ask out of the turbulent emotions of the heart, or *because they put temporal wants before spiritual gifts or blessings*, because they begin at the wrong end? How few honour the *Holy Ghost*

in their prayers! Were they to honour the Holy Ghost, He would *teach* them *how* to pray; He would so show them their *soul's* crying needs, that they would be led *first* to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and then all other things would be added, as God sees best for us. "He that hath given His Son will with Him *also* freely give us all things." See therefore how this abiding in Christ affects all our spiritual life even in its devotional aspect. As we abide in Him we have of His Spirit, that Spirit teaches us how to pray, and so to pray that we may confidently take this promise, this assurance with us on our knees, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Once more, to abide in Christ is the secret of *perseverance in well doing*. There is the *active* aspect of fruitfulness. There is an active working for God. There is the consecration of some gift or power to His service. There is the devotion of some portion of our time or means to those who may be benefited and bettered by our ministrations. In a parish this takes the familiar forms of visiting in an assigned district; teaching in a Sunday school, and other voluntary ministrations. Last New Year's Day I spoke of the various *motives* from which work of this sort might be undertaken, and I endeavoured to point out what was the only

motivé really acceptable to God, and equal to the strain of self-denial. To-day I would point out to you that only as we abide in Christ shall we *persevere* in well doing. Without Him we can *do* nothing, still less can we *persevere*. You know yourselves how apt we are to be "weary in well doing." We become disheartened at the little apparent result of our efforts; we are disappointed, disinclined to go on in the face of disappointment. One says, "I must give up my district, the work is unsatisfactory. I seem to make no impression. The poor care to see me only for what I may give. I do not make much way. My time might be more profitably employed." Another says, "I must give up my class in my Sunday school. The children are dull and uninteresting. I see but little fruit of my labours;" and thus work, once taken up earnestly and entered upon with hopes which experience shows to have been too sanguine, *palls* by degrees upon the taste, becomes irksome, and at last is discontinued. So it will be, so it must be, where it is either taken up from lower motives, or where we do not habitually realise that it is *God's work* we are doing, and that to do *that work* we need grace, strength, Christ's presence, Christ's Spirit; that it is for us to lean on the Holy Ghost, and in His strength to labour, leaving the issue in God's hand, and finding the great

corrective to lukewarmness, indolence, or disappointment in simply and trustfully and hopefully *abiding* in Christ.

What better subject could I take and greet you with, who in the past year have laboured with us, and who are entering to-day on a New Year? What better *motto* could I give you for the New Year? Mark it in your Bibles. Enshrine it in your memory. Act upon it. Live by it. Would you grow this year in grace and in meetness for Heaven? "*Abide in Me.*" Would you exercise an influence for good in the world, so long as God allows you to live? "*Abide in Me.*" Would you be prepared for all that lies before you, duties known, trials unknown; blessings with their snares, sorrows with their temptations; "changes and chances" foreseen or unlooked for, life prolonged beyond this year, or death awaiting you ere its end be reached? "*Abide in Me.*" Would you be strengthened to endure what God does not see good to remove, braced for duty, and encouraged to persevere? "*Abide in Me.*" This we say to you all, specially to those who are associated with this Church and Parish in one or other of its varied ministrations. Set before you a high motive, a high standard. Work from the one up to the other. [This Parish Church of ours, known through the length and breadth of the land for its far-famed

beauty and stately grandeur, of which you are justly jealous and proud, should maintain a high standard. It should be a great centre from which spiritual life, zeal, devotedness, should radiate, and stimulate others. Each one of us in our several ministrations, associated with this Parish Church, should, with God's help and grace, be doing our very best and utmost to set forth His glory.]

Dedicate yourselves anew. Consecrate yourselves afresh. You know what I mean. As you kneel down for a few moments of silent prayer, as you kneel at the Lord's Table, say, "Here am I, Lord. Use me in Thy service. I dedicate myself, my powers, gifts, talents to Thee: wholly, unreservedly. Pardon what has been amiss in the past. Strengthen, energise, empower me for the future. O! Thou true Vine, enable me to cleave to Thee with such a faith that the virtue in Thee may flow into my soul, that I may bring forth much fruit this year to Thy glory." And take with you from this house in which you thus dedicate yourself, this motto, at once your pledge of His Presence, and the strength of your own spiritual life—

"Abide in Me, and I in you."

LORD, SPEAK TO ME !

LORD, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone,
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children lost and lone.

Oh lead me, Lord, that I may lead
The wandering and the wavering feet ;
Oh feed me, Lord, that I may feed
Thy hungering ones with manna sweet.

Oh strengthen me, that while I stand
Firm on the Rock, and strong in Thee,
I may stretch out a loving hand
To wrestlers with the troubled sea.

Oh teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart ;
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.

Oh give Thine own sweet rest to me,
That I may speak with soothing power
A word in season, as from Thee,
To weary ones in needful hour.

Oh fill me with Thy fulness, Lord,
Until my very heart o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word,
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.

Oh use me, Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where ;
Until Thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share.

NOTES OF ADDRESS.

“In the meanwhile His disciples prayed Him, saying, Master, eat. But He said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought Him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.”—ST. JOHN iv. 31-34.

I.

“THE words stand in close connection with our Lord’s conversation with the woman of Samaria.

“The narrative shows the *solicitude* rather than curious inquiry of the disciples. The Greek word here translated ‘*prayed*’ is never used with reference to *prayer*.

“Our Lord’s reply to their carnal or natural way of thinking. To them His abstention from food unintelligible. He had soul-nourishment; soul-sustenance.

“We need not account for this on the theory of any miraculous supply. There is an economy of miracles. Our Saviour was not at all times lifted above the common needs of humanity: *e.g.*, He thirsted; hungered; was weary.

"Doing the will of His Father was meat and drink: not mere *satisfaction*, but nourishment.

"This is literally true, the mind may become so absorbed in happy employment, or even by a sorrow, as for the time to make us forget or be indifferent to meals.

"With Him, it was so. His work was that on which He was ever intent, the salvation of the world.

"This He came to accomplish. It was His Father's will that salvation should be wrought out through Jesus.

"He came both to do and suffer, until it was 'finished.' His motto was—

"Live, live for God,
And toil, lost souls to save.
Bought by the blood,
One aim, one purpose have.

"Point unto Christ the Way,
He died for all ;
Do well thy work to-day
And wait His call."

II.

"What better motto for the New Year, for all—specially for you ?

"First I would remind you that all work is of God's appointment; whatever in our daily life is lawful and right for us to be engaged in is part of

our obedience to God, and therefore part of our religion.

“Great mistake and common to suppose that there is *but one* way of serving or worshipping God. To each is assigned our place, work, duty, even though we may appear to select and choose it for ourselves.

“The most commonplace duties may be made the occasion of a fervent spirit of devotion.

“ ‘ All may of Him partake :
Nothing so mean
But with this tincture (for Thy sake)
May not grow bright and clean.

‘ A servant, with this clause
Makes drudgery divine :
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine.’

—G. HERBERT.

“As we recognise this, that our work is the task God has set us to do, and that in it we may be faithfully doing His will, in how different a spirit we shall do it!

“In this thought lies a safeguard against allowing our daily work to be a hindrance to devotion, as also against regarding devotion as an *occasional* state of the mind, separate and remote from the work of life.

“Safeguard against looking upon our work as *drudgery*; against growing ‘weary in well doing.’

“A help to use it as a direct means of promoting our sanctification; thanking God for it. This motto ours as regards commonplace duties of everyday life.”

III.

“A New Year Motto for those whose work is more visibly and distinctly related to the will of God.

“For Ministers of Christ, lest they ever look on their ministry as *professional*, as something paid for, and to be done only in proportion as they are *paid* for doing it. How different this from *joy* in the Lord's work!

“How needful at such a season to recollect that it is the *work of God* we are called to do; to increase His kingdom; to do His will.

“In this lies the secret of perseverance amidst discouragements, and a corrective of our impatience for results.

“A motto for you who have taken up work in the Parish, and who are aiding in the ministering work of the Parish, not from any lower motive, but from the recognition of the *claim* God has upon you!

“Still more as you realise the ‘constraining love of Christ which inspires you to win souls to Him.

“A motto for a District Visitor; lest district

visiting be perfunctory and aimless. For Sunday-school Teachers, lest teaching the lambs of Christ's flock be wearily or without heart undertaken, but seeing, both in visiting the poor and teaching children, a golden opportunity of usefulness, and praying for grace to use the opportunity aright.

"A motto; because nothing more braces the spiritual life than earnest, loving, faithful work for God.

"Do the work you have undertaken voluntarily, throwing heart and soul into it. If it be worth doing at all, it is worth doing well.

"Aim at some *definite spiritual good*, not content with having gone through a district and left tracts; not content with having heard Collects and Catechism, but aim at some definite end, to bring others to the saving knowledge of Jesus.

"For your encouragement. The conversation with the woman of Samaria led to her own conversion and to that of many more.

"Setting this motto before you, why should not God so use you?

"The fields are white already to the harvest. The poor are at hand, their children in our school.

"Be prepared for discouragement. Work for the souls of men is attended with great and peculiar discouragement.

"The heart of man is very hard and unbelieving.

We have no conception of its desperate hardness until we have tried to do it some good.

“How small comparatively is the number of those who repent and believe, and live for God!

“Bear in mind the work is *His*, not *ours*.

“Rest on His gracious promises.

“Work for God *remains*. How enduring Christ’s work!

“The time for gathering fruit will surely come. Sowing with Him we shall be reapers with Him.

“Faithful preaching is seed sowing. Faithful district visiting is seed sowing. Faithful teaching in a Sunday-school is seed sowing.

“We know not when it shall bring forth fruit. On a sick-bed; in far-off years; in the hour of death.

“The judgment-day will declare. Meanwhile it is for us to work and sow in faith—it must be in faith—and with a patient looking forward to the time when both he that soweth and ‘he that reapeth may rejoice together.’

“Thus enter on this new year. Keep before you the thought, ‘Work while it is called day; the night cometh when no man can work.’

“Draw near to the Lord’s Table in faith. Ask for grace and strength in which to do His will.

“Praise Him for that He allows you to work for Him, and pray that you may be enabled to do all

such good works as He has prepared for you to walk in.

“And that you may so live that your life shall have attained its real end, so that when you come to die you may be able to say, ‘My meat was to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.’”

“No life is lost, no hope is vain,
No prayer without a sequent deed ;
He turns all seeming loss to gain
And finds a soil for every seed.
Some fleeting glance He doth endow ;
He sanctifies some casual word.
Unconscious gifts His children show,
For all is potent with the Lord.

“Half blind amidst the stir of things,
But safe in following out the law ;
We know not what a moment brings,
Nor which way blows the burning straw.
When earth's great heart hath ceased to beat
And all is finished or foreshown,
Marshall'd before the Judgment-Seat,
Then shall we know, as we are known.”

—B. R. PARKES.

NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS, 1879.

“ They shall ask the way to Zion ; with their faces thitherward, saying, Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.”—JEREMIAH l. 5.

As these words stand in the Bible they are connected with a striking prediction of the overthrow of the Chaldean Empire. They refer primarily to the liberation of the Israelites from their long and weary captivity in Babylon, and their return to their own land. It is, moreover, the invitation of Israel to Judah, a stretching out of the right hand of fellowship. Previous to their captivity inveterate enmity existed between these two nations. Fellowship in suffering had done much to soften it. They were now participators in the same happy deliverance. Past animosity was to be forgotten. Reconciled the one to the other they were to testify to the sincerity of their reconciliation by godly concord, and by a full dedication of themselves to the God who had redeemed them.

I take the words as a kind of *motto* for the New Year of 1879, on which by God's sparing

mercy we are to day entered. It has been our custom now for some years past, wherever I have been allowed of God to minister, to suggest to such as yourselves, more particularly identified and associated with us, some text, as a *motto*. I am thankful that we can meet together this morning in this chapel, and for a short space hold communion with God. It is best, is it not, thus to begin a New Year with thoughts of God? Time flies quickly—very quickly by! We are passing another milestone on the great highway of life which leads—whither? Oh! that this be the attitude of our minds, the uppermost thought, as well as inclination of our hearts—"They shall ask the way to *Zion* with their faces *thitherward*." For we are bidden rather to look *forward* than to look *backward*. If we look backward it is for warning or for encouragement. The Israelites were bidden remember Taberah, and Massah, and Kibroth-hataavah, as occasions of provocation in the wilderness, places where they tempted God, scenes of sin and its sure chastisement. And this recalling of the past was salutary and needful in so far as it brought to remembrance sins never to be again committed. For to remember past sin without sorrow is to sin again. There may be a hankering after past sin which is the looking back of Lot's wife on Sodom, and such looking back is fraught with peril. The

sailor recalls shoals or reefs on which he was once wrecked, that he for the future may keep clear of danger. There may be with ourselves a review of life, profitless or profitable. You cannot recall the years that are fled. You cannot unsay or undo what has been spoken and done. The review of life is profitable as we use experience, gained by failure or success, in the time to come. It is with the review of life as with self-examination. That exercise of religion which turns religion into real and impressive reality where wisely used, may, by injudicious use become morbid and unprofitable. There is a self-examination which may make us spiritual invalids. To be continually recalling past sins in cases, *e.g.*, of a true conversion to God, where forgiveness has been truly felt, and the sweet sense of reconciliation experienced, is practically not to believe in the forgiveness of sins if we recall it not for *warning* but for *self-chiding*. When God forgives He *forgets*; His forgiveness is also His forgetfulness. "Thy sins and thine iniquities," where truly repented of, "will I remember no more." If your child commits a fault and confesses it, and sorrows over it, and asks for forgiveness and you forgive, would it not be ungenerous in you ever to name that fault again? What confidence could your child have in you, or what confidence in forgiveness if it could not believe that the past was forgotten? It is so with the review of life.

Look back upon it, if need be, to recall the occasions of sin that you may not so sin again. Look back upon it to remember the lovingkindness that pardoned and spared you. Look back, in days of despondency, to recall how the loving Lord has never really failed or disappointed you. Remember all the way by which He has led you these forty years, so that when flesh and heart fail, you may draw upon past experience and take heart for the future, but ever remember that in one sense we are bidden forget the things which are behind and to reach forth to those things which are before. We are to "press on toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus." I know no greater or more sure test of spirituality and heavenly-mindedness than this, "Am I asking the way to Zion? Is my face thitherward?" As years come and go are they bringing me, *personally*, not simply nearer the end, to that bourne whence no traveller returns, to the hour when the shadows of Eternity fall fast, to the last sickness, the latest breath, the moment when friends looking on shall say "It is all over," "he is gone," but, as the years come and go, and others outrun me in the race of life, do these fleeting years bring me nearer *God*? Is Heaven my longed-for goal? Do I more and more desire to be where the holiest and saintliest dwell? Am I solicitous, above all things, for my soul's wellbeing and eternal safety? Am

I asking and inquiring the way to life? Am I using all those means of grace in the devout use of which I am sure to find guidance, help, and protection? Am I happiest in the society of real Christian and godly people? Am I jealous of anything that can hinder or impede me in my Christian course? Do I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord? Am I prepared to sacrifice what the world holds dear that I may win Christ? Am I ready, cheerfully, to do the will of God, or patiently to endure whatever He may see good and needful for the discipline of my soul? Am I fully alive to the truth that my *whole life* must be a preparation for seeing God, and that to give up the dregs of a misspent life is *not* preparation for Eternity? Do I feel that it is not the repentance of a death hour extorted by fear, but *the lifelong devotion of the forgiven man* which He looks for, and is it my greatest fear lest I should come short of glory? Yes, brethren, it is a great test of spirituality and heavenly-mindedness to be able or unable, on this New Year's Day, to say, "I am asking the way to Zion, with my face thitherward." Why is it such a test? Because this is the language and mutual encouragement, and holy resolve of children redeemed from bondage. These Israelites had been in a state of exile, slavery, degradation, helplessness. From all this they were now comparatively

delivered. "Going and weeping, they shall go, and seek the Lord their God." Their exile was the punishment of their stiff-neckedness. Sin had been vividly brought to their remembrance. They mourned over the past with godly sorrow. They had no heart to sing in their captivity one of the songs of Zion. Harps hung on willow trees untouched and unstrung. But at last deliverance came. It is the language of children redeemed from the house of bondage. And so have we been redeemed by Him, who was, as at this time, born into this sinful world to be our Saviour. What are we but exiles from Paradise, seeking a city yet to come? What bondage more cruel than the bondage of sin? What degradation deeper than that one made in the image of God should fall to the depths of sin into which man may fall! Who more helpless than one who cannot save himself? What is the unflattering description of our state as given in the inspired Word of God? "Wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Jesus came to redeem us. He gave His life a ransom for many. He delivers from the guilt, dominion, love, and penalties of sin. "We who were far off are made nigh by the blood of Jesus." And so it is that "through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." We do not "ask the way to Zion" before we

have known this godly sorrow over sin. It is first evening and then morning. New emotions are awakened. There is the conviction of personal guilt. There is the sense of pardoning grace. There is the consciousness of forbearing mercy, of a love that would not let us alone, or leave us to perish. Then, and not till then, not until we see from what we have been redeemed, do we "ask the way to Zion." Religion ceases to be a form. It becomes an earnest reality. We want to know more about it. We are solicitous for our soul's well-being. We ask how that can be promoted and secured. We think over the ways in which this newly awakened interest can be sustained. We study and profit by the experience of God's believing people. We gladly become members of a Bible class for the more detailed and devotional study of God's Word. We join a Prayer Union. We identify ourselves with some bracing work of the Church. Over and above a heightened and more intelligent apprehension of all the ordinary means of grace, which are to us now what they never were before, matters connected with Christ's kingdom have an interest they never had for us before, and the prayer "*Thy kingdom come*" is now the real desire of a working life and a waiting spirit. Is this your own experience? You have lived now not a few years in this world, years that *can never be recalled*. Has the conviction of guilt

been yours? Has the "godly sorrow" been your own? Have you experienced the redeeming love of Jesus? Have you yourself in the story of your own spiritual life felt His constraining love? If so, you will readily understand what follows, and how *naturally* it follows, as effect or cause. "Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten."

What is this in so many words but *consecration*? In the very word "*Come*" is there not the ring of *decision* for God? And this is what God requires. There is much apparent activity for Christ, and yet with this apparent activity there may be great worldliness of heart. You or I may be diligent, active; we may know but little rest, and yet the heart may never have been fully surrendered to the Lord. The desire for salvation may or may not be a ruling principle. Religion may be only outward, a form, a cloak, it may not be a *power*, a principle. It is decision for God which tells. It tells on ourselves in the rest and peace which accompanies it. The "great transaction" has taken place once for all. "My heart is fixed, O God. My heart is no longer wavering and inconstant, but fixed. I will sing and give praise." It tells on others in the *power* which belongs to it. We are seen and felt to be *real*. How needful, therefore, for you who are aiding in the ministering work of the Church! For in decision is the

secret of perseverance and the safeguard against weariness in well-doing. Is this *decision* for God yours?

There is more than decision for God implied in this godly resolve of Israel and Judah. There is an *alliance* with God. "Let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." How great the privilege of being "fellow-workers with God!" What does not that work aim at? What is not promised to those who are on the Lord's side? Must it not be well and safe for us both for time and eternity? He promises us pardon, restoration, favour, all things really needful even to the end, and after this life is ended, a crown. Yes, it may be the joy, in proportion to our faithfulness, of service yet higher and more blessed! "His servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face, and His Name shall be in their foreheads." Such alliance with a covenant God in Christ, strengthened, energised, and made fruitful in good works because of our abiding in Christ, is a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. "Blessed are the dead - which die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

Shall I not encourage you to ally and associate yourselves with God! If God be for us, who can be against us! Shall not one of many New Year's

resolutions be, "As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord"? What power for good a district visitor may exercise if she have given her own self to the Lord! How golden her opportunities if she ask God to give her grace to use them to His glory! What power for good a Sunday-school teacher may exercise, where there is first consecration on the teacher's part! You will pray for each child in your class. You will desire, above all things, the *conversion* of those entrusted to your care. You will long to bring them to the Saviour for His embrace and blessing. What power for good is centred in and may radiate over a large area from a Bible class; each member carrying away some thought to cherish, some lesson of life and godliness to live out in their own world of acquaintance and home! Yes! it is a great test of our spirituality how far we really *care* for these things; how far, setting out on a New Year, we are asking "the way to Zion with our faces thitherward."

God grant that the resolve be your own; a resolve made in the conviction of the high privilege of working with God. To this end recall the past, the sins you have been so freely, so tenderly forgiven; the love that has pitied and redeemed you in the days of old, the mercy that has spared and brought you thus far safely on your toilsome way. Look back on the years that are now

numbered with the past. Recall the never-failing loving-kindnesses of the Lord; all the blessings with which your path has been strewn; all the providential care which has watched over, guided, and preserved you. And as you dwell sadly and thoughtfully on these chequered memories, remember how strong, how paramount His claim on you, Whose you are, to Whom you owe all you have. As you draw near the Lord's Table make your act of Communion the occasion of a renewed dedication, saying, "Here I offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, *myself*, my soul and body, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee." Be this resolve one not "forgotten." Day by day dedicate yourself. In your morning devotion say, "Here am I, Lord. Use me this day in Thy service, when Thou wilt, as Thou wilt, where Thou wilt." Do what you have to do in a sanctified spirit. Do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and for your encouragement in days of weakness remember that God's biddings are Christ's enablings. Taking for your motto, This God is my God for ever and ever, He shall be my guide unto death, He will keep, empower, encourage you. As the years come and go, you shall go from strength to strength until at last you appear in Zion. For is not such His own promise—"They shall go from strength to strength, until they *appear every one of them in Zion*"?

TEACH ME TO LIVE !

TEACH me to live ! 'Tis easier far to die—

Gently and silently to pass away—

On earth's long night to close the heavy eye,
And waken in the realms of glorious day.

Teach me that harder lesson—*how to live,*

To serve Thee in the darkest paths of life ;

Arm me for conflict now—fresh vigour *give,*
And make me more than conqueror in the strife.

Teach me to live !—Thy purpose to fulfil :

Bright for Thy glory let *my* taper shine ;

Each day renew, re-mould *this* stubborn will :
Closer round *Thee my* heart's affections twine.

Teach me to live *for* self and sin no more ;

But use *the* time remaining to me yet,

Not *mine own* pleasure seeking, as before—
Wasting no precious hours in vain regret.

Teach me to live ! No idler let me be,

But in Thy service hand and heart employ ;

Prepared to do Thy bidding cheerfully—

Be this my highest and my holiest joy.

Teach me to live !—my daily cross to bear ;

Nor murmur though I bend beneath its load,

Only be with me. Let me feel Thee near :

Thy smile sheds gladness on the darkest road.

Teach me to live !—and find my life in Thee—

Looking from earth and earthly things away ;

Let me not falter, but untiringly

Press on ; and gain new strength and power each day.

Teach me to live !—with kindly words for all—

Wearing no cold, repulsive brow of gloom ;

Waiting, with cheerful patience, till Thy call

Summons my spirit to her heavenly home.

ADDRESS TO DISTRICT VISITORS.

L

VISITING FROM A SOCIAL POINT OF VIEW.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”—ST. JAMES I. 27.

I HAVE for some time felt that greater *reality* should be given to our monthly meetings, that we should not assemble merely to bring in accounts of expenditure, receive alms for the month to come, and exchange tracts, but that our meetings may be made the occasion of a few words of exhortation bearing on district visiting, and solemnised with needful and earnest prayer. The opening of a New Year affords a fitting opportunity for doing what I cannot but reproach myself with for not having done before, and I hope, God willing, to bring before you month by month certain aspects of district visiting which may prove helpful and profitable. No parish priest can well exaggerate the value of a good staff of wise, loving, and active district visitors. Where the work is truly and effi-

ciently done they minimise the otherwise almost overwhelming work of a large parish, and they enable a curate to *concentrate* his ministrations on cases specially needing his help, instead of dissipating energy in an almost hopeless attempt to visit with regularity all places under his care. He ought to feel assured that no case of *real* distress could occur without its being *at once* brought to his cognisance, and in any well-worked parish that any sick should be unvisited for two or three days should be quite impossible. If a district visitor desires to make visiting a *reality*, she should keep the pastor or curate well informed of all cases which she thinks ought to be visited by him. I will not anticipate what I shall have to say in future addresses, but I would start from this view, that the responsibility of visiting in a district is as great as the opportunity for doing some work for God is privileged. The clergyman confidently entrusts a certain portion of his flock to the diligent supervision of one particular person, and he *must* feel that that trust is being conscientiously exercised, if his own mind is to be relieved of burden, and not to be weighted with the haunting thought that many of his sheep are not being shepherded. It seems to me that the responsibility of a district visitor is *twofold*: first to *God*, inasmuch as work for Him has been *voluntarily* under-

taken, and next to the clergyman in whose parish she visits, inasmuch as he trusts her that there shall be no occasion of reproach to himself on account of any negligence or remissness on her part. She should be anxious so to discharge her duty as not to lay him open to any unmerited censure for neglect, and for not visiting, where, but for depending on her, he would have visited. And then the *privilege* is great, for surely it is a privilege to be allowed of God to do anything for Him, to be a fellow-worker with God, to be instrumental in bringing home to the homes and hearts of our less happily circumstanced poor the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and endeavouring, so far as lies in our power, not only to ameliorate their condition, where that condition legitimately admits of amelioration, but to help them to realise another and better world. And I would therefore regard district visiting to-day from, shall I say its *lower* grounds, merely from a *social*, not from a *benevolent* or *spiritual* point of view. It *may* be thus regarded. There is no grade or class of society which, while it more quickly responds to and appreciates real kindness, is more easily excited against those who are superior in birth and station to themselves. The political agitator, the social incendiary, the plausible demagogue, finds his material for inflammation and his sphere of pernicious influence

amongst what, rightly or wrongly, are called the "working classes." The contrast their condition of life presents, with its privations, hardships, and inconveniences, to theirs who know little or nothing of the condition and temptations of poverty in itself, if not rightly viewed, affords abundant occasion for envy, murmuring, discontent, and disaffection; and district visiting may do a good work in mitigating if not eradicating this feeling of class against class. It encourages that kindly intercourse, and that brotherly sympathy which makes us feel that "we are brethren," and one touch of nature makes the whole world kin. Where the district visitor is not a spy on the life and habits, not a common intruder, not one who lifts the lid to see what the family is going to have for dinner; where she is no lady patroness, no would-be censor; where she respects the sanctity and privacy of the homes of the poor as much as she would desire that of her own home respected; where she asks for admittance and does not feel herself entitled to enter without knocking and invitation; where she visits in the spirit of a Christian sister rather than in that of a "worker," such visiting cannot but be productive of good. It must help to break down the barrier between class and class. It must, in the exercise of loving sympathy with the difficulties, trials, and cares of the poor, bring about a more healthy feel-

ing, and gradually engender a more kindly and trusting spirit. We can never fully estimate the value of one kind visit in the hour of need, of words tenderly spoken, of advice judiciously given, of timely help bestowed. We never know the effect produced in the mind of the poor by the simple fact that one, superior to them in station of life, and of her own voluntariness, visits their homes for no motive but one, and that the unsought, sincere, simple desire to befriend and assist them. For the district visitor should aim at nothing less than the endeavour to *get into the hearts of those she visits*, and to be looked upon less as "the lady who calls and leaves a tract," than as one who, as a *personal friend*, seeks to make homes sunnier, hearts happier, and cares lighter. How much, therefore, may be brought about of kindly influence through a "mothers' meeting," or a "girls' sewing class," and into how many homes may the influence be carried thence. How much, too, may not a district visitor learn *herself* from familiar intercourse with the poor. She sees how much of sin and vice is the result of circumstances. She judges less hastily. She learns to make more allowance. She finds there is room for pity and compassion as well as for reproof and blame. She does not always put down neglect of means of grace to actual indifference or even unbelief.

She is brought face to face with the real difficulties and hindrances of the poor, and in a drunken husband and the unequal fight with a poverty for which she cannot be blamed, she sees often the reason why the house of God is seldom trod, and Holy Communion still more rarely frequented. Instead of harshly judging and freely censuring, and from a supposed superior platform generally condemning, she returns to her home to thank God for the comforts which await her after her visits, for the many blessings denied to others, for the absence of any let or hindrance to participate in means of grace, and that she is spared, and may perhaps never know, the temptations to which those she has been visiting are exposed, and as she sits down to her carefully prepared meal and shuts out cold and hunger from her door, wan and weary faces, half-clad and half-fed children, poverty-stricken and vice-cursed homes people her memory, and she thinks what she can spare from her own table for the poor, what she can do without, which would be a boon to one wanting perhaps the necessities of life; what she could send to some sick-bed, or take to some sufferer which would soothe and cheer. For surely if it be so that our blessed Lord girded Himself with our humanity that He might have full experience of its wants and weaknesses, and tasted of human woe that He might be

able, from that knowledge which comes out of experience, to sympathise with us, we shall do well to remember His example who came not to be ministered unto but to minister; and while we ask Him to give us all needful grace to use our opportunities aright and to His glory, we will not forget also to ask that intercourse with the poor may deepen our thankfulness for our many mercies, may enlarge our sympathies towards those less happily circumstanced than ourselves, and may help us more practically to realise that, amongst many apparent differences and distinctions, we are all members in particular of this one body of which Christ is both Saviour and Head.

LOVE'S MINISTRY.

There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."

I HEARD the wavelet kiss the shore
Ere lost within the sea,
And the ripple of the silvery tide
Seemed as a psalm to me ;

Contented with God's holy will,
Its feeble voice to raise
To hymn His glory, and be lost,
Nor thirst for human praise.

Lord, make me like the ocean's voice,
Obedient to Thy will ;
Thy purpose work as faithfully,
And at Thy word be still.

A breeze that filled the drooping sail,
Bore to one sorrowing breast
A promise from the Lord of life,
And sank again to rest.

Brief was its service, few the words
It wafted to the shore,
But they nestled in a mourner's heart,
And the west wind's task was o'er.

I, like the sea-breeze, swift and true,
Thy messenger would be,
And bear, Lord, to some burdened soul,
A word of peace from Thee.

I marked the soft dew silently
Descend o'er plain and hill ;
On each parched herb and drooping flower
The heavenly cloud distil.

As noiseless as the sun's first beams,
It vanished with the day ;
But the waving fields told where it fell
When the dew had passed away.

Lord, make me like the gentle dew,
That other hearts may prove,
E'en through Thy feeblest messenger,
Thy ministry of love.

From "The Brook in the Way."

ADDRESS TO DISTRICT VISITORS.

II.

VISITING FROM A BENEVOLENT POINT OF VIEW.

Read St. Matthew xxv. 31-46.

AT our last meeting I addressed you on the *social* aspect of district visiting. I endeavoured to point out some of the beneficial results which may be looked for from a kindly intercourse of different classes and grades of society, and the effect visiting the poor may have of breaking down much of that feeling which too often and unhappily exists on their part towards those who differ from them in circumstance and station. Though it be the lowest step of the ladder, it is not one to be despised, and where a district visitor may not be able to discern much fruit of her visiting, she may, nevertheless, have contributed to bring about a more healthy way of thinking amongst the poor in her district. She has run the ploughshare through the soil for better seed to follow. Kind and gentle words go a long way with us all, and particularly with those who too often hear words rough and rude. Thoughtful acts of kind-

ness are a contrast to thoughtless selfishness, and tender sympathy with want and trial is as balm to those who, in addition to trial, hear words of reproach and murmuring. Do not lose sight of the purely *social* view of district visiting, or think lightly of it because it does not seem to have much that is spiritual in it. Surely kindness and sympathy are of the mind of Christ. But I would to-day take you a step higher. I would speak to you of your work from a *benevolent* point of view, and by this we mean some act which proceeds from a pure desire to do good, so that in going the round of your district, or visiting a particular family, you do not go "uncertainly, or as one that beateth the air," but you go with a *definite aim and object*. There is much visiting which, for all practical purposes, is *aimless*. It would be difficult to say what after two hours visiting has been really done. The district has been visited from a sense of duty, the tract exchanged, there has been the friendly greeting, and the "How do you do to-day?" and some commonplace inquiries, and yet on returning home, conscience relieved and the feeling that the district has not been neglected, is about all that could be said to be the result. Nothing that we do should be so done as to leave in the mind the feeling that nothing has been done.

R

"So should we live, that every hour
May die as dies the natural flower,
A self-reviving thing of power."

If we have before us a distinct, definite object, that goes a long way towards attaining it. For instance, you go to inquire if there be any fresh case of sickness, or to visit some one or more sick persons. That is a definite object. And here at once you have opportunity for exercising sympathy. In the limited and often crowded accommodation of the houses of the working classes, the sick are stowed away, not from unkindness or neglect, but through the sheer necessity of a working man's life. The healthy are actively employed, the sick must take their chance for such care and tending as hours between work will admit of. How great an aggravation sickness is of poverty? We who have means to command comforts know of how much alleviation sickness is capable; how pain may be assuaged, and suffering mitigated. The poor know but little of these alleviations. They cannot command them. Timely help may, under God, bring about a speedy recovery to the breadwinner, or the mother of a family, or the little one detained from school or employment. We may find that the case is one for the Hospital or Infirmary. We may disabuse the mind of some common prejudices against these excellent



institutions. The poor are hardly aware of the inestimable advantage of an Infirmary. They have somehow got it into their heads that they are practised upon, made the involuntary subjects of some new theory, or medicine, or régime. They are persuaded that, in the event of death, the authorities claim the corpse for autopsy. We have to disabuse their minds of these fears as much as we have to guard against the abuse of the charity. In the metropolis it is not difficult for a man going the rounds of the Hospitals to live in them for a considerable length of time. We have to encourage them to avail themselves to the full of the skill, medicine, and care gratuitously placed at their disposal. We can point out to them how they can enjoy comforts and alleviations which they could not command at home, and how much more speedy and effectual a recovery may be. If the case be not one for an Infirmary it affords occasion for acts of thoughtful kindness. We may persuade others to take an interest in the case. Some little delicacy may be less "spared from our table" than sent expressly from our kitchen. There is opportunity for reading the Bible, for prayer. Sickness makes us all soft and ductile. You can say to the sick what you have hesitated to say to them in health. You can remind them of the house of God forsaken, of His holy day

desecrated, of Holy Communion neglected. You can put the church-goer in mind of lessons heard in the day of health, and, it may be, heard unheeded. You can remind them that every sickness is a shadow cast athwart our path of the sickness which shall one day prove mortal, and bid them live a life of preparation for the great and inevitable change. And it will give effect and emphasis to your words when they are accompanied by considerate acts of kindness. A few flowers from your garden—how refreshing are flowers in a sick-room! If God give you voice why not sit down and sing a few sweet hymns! We who have been laid on a bed of sickness know the fragrance of sweet flowers, the quieting joy of a familiar hymn. Is not this part of district visiting? Again: you are brought face to face with poverty, and not unfrequently with that poverty which is retiring and shrinks from publicity and mendicancy. How often we find that the cases most needing and deserving help are those which most unwillingly obtrude themselves on our notice. The lesson may perhaps be yet hardly said to have been learned, or the plan hit upon, how to relieve the poor without pauperising them. We cannot too strongly condemn the pernicious habit of indiscriminate and undiscerning almsgiving, of money bestowed on the impulse of

the moment, as a relief to conscience, or to get rid of one who "crieth after us." It is very rarely that any real good is done by this form of relieving. Professional beggars are thus encouraged. But there are many cases which come to our knowledge where want is not through improvidence, extravagance, or intemperance. It is the result of circumstances beyond human control. And yet even here, I am persuaded, the rule is the more wise and safe to give in kind and not in money, and that there must be something special to call for any departure from this rule. You do not know how money will be spent. The order for clothing, coals, wine, meat, or groceries may occasionally be exchanged for the dram, but it is not generally so; and you at least have done all in your power to prevent the relief given being abused, especially where the means placed at your disposal have been consecrated to God in Holy Communion. It is, I am equally persuaded, better that alms should be distributed by district visitors rather than by the clergy of the parish. It strengthens the hands of the visitor, while it may weaken those of the clergy; for the less the spiritual office is merged in that of a clerical relieving officer's the better. It is not desirable that we should feel that the object of our visit is impatient that the visit should come to an end in the expectation of some dole.

It will assist in accustoming the poor to receive the clergy for their work and message sake if the visit of clergymen be not associated with giving relief. We shall soon also discern what real value they set on spiritual ministrations, and we shall check any tendency to unreality or hypocrisy. A story is told of an old woman, in a well-known parish, who had survived many changes of curates, and who on a new curate visiting her for the first time thus addressed him, "Oh! you is the new curate! Well! sit down now, and I will tell you what you does when you comes to visit me. You sits you down, you reads me a *short* Psalm, then you gives me a shilling, and then you can go!" It may in some cases be real charity to pay the school fees for one or more children, where you have good reason to believe that the family cannot afford to do so; for though the cost of a child's education per week is about the price of one glass of beer, there will be cases of distress not attributable to intemperance. We may give one out of employment a day's work—and pay him good wages for it too—who says he is willing to do a day's work. I have known instances where the offer to give work has been a very real test, and has discovered the man to be idle and not a proper object of charity. We may encourage thrift by establishing Penny Banks in connection with

each district, advising the poor to pay into them, and, if need be, calling for their savings on one particular day, for the temptation is great to spend savings. In all these and many other practical ways you may relieve poverty without pauperising, and perhaps anticipate it so as to prevent it. Again, you are brought face to face with the troubles, cares, anxieties of the poor. Many of them living in a very contracted sphere of life are really ignorant of the ways in which, humanly speaking, many of our ordinary troubles may be prevented, or, when they come upon us, mitigated. Their troubles are as real as our own, and they have few to help them. Sympathise with them. Sit down and listen to what they have to say. It may tax your patience. It may be a long story they have to tell. Still it does them good to tell it, and does you no harm to hear it. Let them feel they have a friend in you, a real *friend*. Give them kindly advice. You may write a letter for one, or use a little interest on behalf of another. A husband has deserted his wife, or he is of intemperate habits, or she is ill-tempered and querulous; a child has erred, a daughter has fallen into grievous sin; a son has left his home, or gone abroad to serve his country. There is a charity, and a family wants to get a child into it; in numberless ways you can counsel, befriend, console. This is

to visit in a *benevolent* spirit, and is not to be despised, no more than the *social* aspect, because it does not seem to have anything very spiritual in it. God uses each one of us in His own way. We are separate links in the great chain of humanity. And how grateful and acceptable is the help when it is not proffered with an air of superiority, or forced on the poor, but when it proceeds from a tender and loving heart, which delights in acts of kindness, and shows kindness in a delicate and gracious spirit, not wounding sensitiveness, not doing good in a disagreeable way, or so that it can be evil spoken of, but in the spirit of a true Christian gentlewoman. Such a loving, tender spirit must tell. Like the shadow of St. Peter, it heals where it falls. You yourself will be no little gainer by the exercise of sympathy.

Sickness, poverty, trouble evoke that sympathy which is one of our noblest endowments, for "one touch of nature makes the whole world kin." It shows how true the words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and in ministering to others we have this great encouragement from the Master's lips—

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto *Me*."

THE LAW OF LOVE.

2 KINGS iv. 1-6.

Pour forth the oil, pour boldly forth,
It will not fail until
Thou failest vessels to provide,
Which it may largely fill.

But then when such are found no more,
Though flowing broad and free,
Till then, and nourished from on high,
It straightway stanch'd will be.

Dig channels for the streams of Love,
Where they may broadly run ;
And Love has overflowing streams
To fill them every one.

But if at any time thou cease
Such channels to provide,
The very founts of Love for thee
Will soon be parched and dried.

For we must share, if we would keep
That good thing from above ;
Ceasing to give, we cease to have—
Such is the law of Love.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

ADDRESS TO DISTRICT VISITORS.

III.

VISITING FROM A MEDICINAL POINT OF VIEW.

I AM anxious, as you are aware, that our monthly meeting of district visitors should be more than the mere occasion of receiving your accounts and distributing relief, but that we should give reality to what is apt to become *formal* by regarding district visiting in different aspects, and by giving short addresses on topics which bear more or less directly on the work you have undertaken. I have already pointed out the benefit that arises from intercourse between different grades of society, and that from a *social* point of view district visiting may be productive of much good. On another occasion I dwelt on district visiting from a *benevolent* point of view, *e.g.*, searching out sickness, poverty, troubles, wants, with the object of relieving them with discretion. To-day we would go on to speak of your work from what, for a better word, I would call a *medicinal* point of

view, teaching those you visit how to nurse, how to mix and make food for invalids, and telling them of simple and easy remedies. I do not pretend to speak with any authority, but I may perhaps speak from some experience. During my ministry in Paris, it was part of my duty to visit the large hospitals, and to minister to our countrymen who might be found within them. This gave me some insight into the system abroad, and awakened in me a peculiar interest in hospital work. During my ministry in London I was officially connected with two of our large hospitals, Charing Cross and King's College, and I acted as chaplain for two years to St. John's Home and Sisterhood for Training Nurses. I held occasional services for the day and night nurses, and was in the habit of giving them short addresses in the private chapel. This brought me much in contact with those who are specially occupied with visiting and nursing the sick and dying. But there is a knowledge which comes only with experience. It pleased God "to take me aside from the multitude" and to lay me on a bed of sickness for three months, with an illness which at one time threatened to be fatal. I have known therefore the weariness of illness, and have learned by personal experience what a difference tender nursing makes. You may not be called, strictly and definitely, to nurse the

sick, nor to adopt a vocation which, blessed as it is, no one should undertake without a very clear call to and fitness for it. Still some little knowledge on the subject is not to be despised, and the exercise of a little common sense is sometimes more valuable than technical knowledge. To heal the sick as well as save the soul was part of our Saviour's ministry. And following in His footsteps, some of the most successful missionaries have been men who cultivated a knowledge of medicine with gifts of preaching. There is probably no "ill to which flesh is heir" that does not admit of mitigation and assuagement, and on the other hand there is no form of disease which may not be aggravated and intensified by ignorance or want of thought. Good is therefore done by bringing to bear upon the sick superior knowledge, especially when that is the result of personal experience, refinement of feeling and manners, tender sympathy, and a gentle spirit. Take for instance a case of sickness, chronic, such as consumption, cancer, general decay, or nervous prostration; or take a case of fever or a broken limb, where the illness is of shorter duration, how many are the possible alleviations! How much there is, to begin with, in *example*, in the very way in which you enter the room, the tone of voice in which you speak, the manner in which you approach a sickbed. "Manner," says one, "is

something with every one, and everything with some. It is not enough to be good, you must be gracious as well. Do not walk into a poor man's house as if it were your own." Your *manner* will be contagious. And will it not help us to approach the sick softly and quietly just as we realise that the hand of the Lord is upon him? It may be true that the sickness may be traced to some well ascertained cause, or be hereditary; it may have been superinduced by a sinful habit, but for all that the affliction comes from God, sometimes in chastisement, sometimes not so much in chastisement for sin as in the discipline of love. Look upon the sick with *respect*, on the dying with *awe*. You are dealing with a soul which the Lord has called aside from the multitude; with whom God Himself is dealing. Do not "frustrate the grace of God." It is a great opportunity. Use it aright. One prime requisite in visiting the sick is sober cheerfulness, as distinct from that boisterous hilarity which, if the sick man were equal to the shock, would find vent in a hearty clap on the back, and "Well, how do you find yourself to-day?" as distinct from the lively bidding a man to "*cheer up*," when physical exhaustion and nervous prostration make the effort ghastly in the extreme. A cheerful expression, and a cheerful countenance, go a great way. The majority of men and women

fear to die. They are all their lifetime subject to bondage. Their life is no preparation for its end. The thought of death is one from which they flee. The possibility of not recovering, and of a fatal issue, is always more or less an ingredient in sickness. The thought, the fear is there. In some cases nervous apprehension is so acute that a melancholy and doleful look might seriously retard recovery. To go up to a sick man, and dolefully ask him "Do you think you are going to die?" or, "Do you think you are going to recover?" would be almost to sign his death-warrant there and then. Life and death are in the hands of God, and though experience of sickbeds enables you fairly to discern the premonitory symptoms of death, for some of these are unmistakable, yet there is a cheerfulness which may be maintained without loss of gravity or sobriety of demeanour, and which, as it springs from an habitual trust in God, may inspire the sick with humble confidence in Him also. To this I would add, that after kindly inquiring into the sick man's state of health, it is well to divert the mind as much as possible from dwelling on the physical condition. The sick, and very naturally, dwell on the symptoms of their illness; to do so excites sympathy, and is to them a certain relief. But you are not the medical man. You must not forget that you are

visiting for the pastor. Your visit, moreover, is a break in the day. To yourself it may appear ordinary, having nothing particular about it. To the *sick* a visit is a break in the monotony of sickness. What you did, what you said, what you talked about, the little act of thoughtful kindness, the advice given, all this remains on the mind, is thought over, recalled, related to others after you have left. Of how much importance, therefore, is it that the impression left should be *good* as well as *kindly*; that some spiritual benefit should accrue from your visit as well as its being a cheerful break in the day. Avoid as much as possible trifling conversation and frivolous gossip. There is no lack of those whose only thought is to beguile the sick with worldly conversation. *You* are in close contact with a soul detached for a while from the world. Especially is this to be borne in mind where there is but small, if any, hope of recovery. What thought would many give to their soul but for the clergyman and district visitor? It is a grave charge to bring against medical men, and yet twenty-three years of a varied ministry compels me to say it, that often, from mistaken notions, they allow a man to pass out of life, buoying him up with hopes of recovery where the fatal issue must be clearly foreseen, and on the plausible and perhaps well-intentioned plea that "he is not to

These addresses of an eminent clergyman, whose varied experience in large parishes is equalled only by his readiness to impart it to those beyond his borders, I heartily commend to all who would make the Church's work among the poor, by the hands of her devout daughters, solid, vital, and lasting. With all my mind I believe in the value of "district visiting," when it is done as it ought to be done. And with all my heart I ask God's blessing on this substantial contribution to its higher efficiency, not without thankful memories, tinged with a happy sadness, of the help I have myself received during past times, and for more retired labours from the indefatigable help of most dear friends, who in the nineteenth century of the Church's life reproduce the Apostolic description in the first, while they deserve the commendation it implies—

"A succourer of many, and of myself also."

"Oh, lead me oft to huts where poor men lie,
Not in the hope fantastical to find
That Innocence, from palaces exiled,
Has taken refuge under sordid roofs,
But knowing what of evil, what of good,
Is to be looked for there, and with firm faith,
That for the eye, made wise by charity,
Much good will there, as everywhere, be found—
Patience by lengthened suffering not outworn,

THEORY

The theory of the present experiment is based on the fact that the rate of reaction between a metal and an acid is proportional to the surface area of the metal. The rate of reaction is measured by the volume of gas evolved per unit time. The surface area of the metal is varied by using different sizes of metal pieces. The rate of reaction is measured by the volume of gas evolved per unit time. The rate of reaction is measured by the volume of gas evolved per unit time.

The rate of reaction is measured by the volume of gas evolved per unit time.

be disturbed," that his mind is "to be kept perfectly quiet," they prevent his making his peace with God before he dies. It may be very true in theory that *their* work is to do their utmost to save life, and this may become the absorbing thought to the exclusion of every other consideration. But a man has a soul to be saved as well as a life to be spared, and in his effort to bring about the one I do not see why the medical man should stand in the way of the greater blessing being mine. I have known more than one medical man, after a "Mission," acknowledge to me with heartfelt sorrow that he has often come between a clergyman and the dying; that quick upon his own conversion and the discovery of the worth of his own soul, has been sorrow that he should have hindered others, and he has faithfully promised that he would never again be guilty of such mistaken if not cruel "kindness." As far as my own experience goes the visit of a clergyman, so far from *disturbing*, rather *quiets* the mind; the thoughts are diverted into another channel. It not unfrequently happens that an illness is aggravated by severe mental conflict, and deep spiritual distress; the mind is disturbed with subjects which the sick man feels he cannot mention to his medical man, partly because he would have no sympathy with it, and partly because he would probably not

know how to deal with it. A medical man of some note and of large hospital experience wrote, some short time ago, a series of papers in the "Day of Rest," on the medicinal power of prayer. My memory does not serve me for the particular title of his interesting papers, but they were written to prove, from abundant instances, how *quieting*, soothing, and blessed were the ministrations of religion in the sick-room. In the Roman communion this is not only recognised but given effect to. Many of the wards, *e.g.*, in the larger hospitals, have all the paraphernalia of religion. They have an altar fitted up in the ward, and a staff of *Sœurs de Charité* attached to each ward. The experience of an hospital is *not* against the ever-present ministrations of religion. Why should such ministrations be viewed with fear for their "disturbing" effect in private? Without dwelling further on a topic on which much might be said, I would only remind you how important it is that you should visit with the "mind of Christ" as often as you enter a sick-room. How comforting a few words of prayer! How consoling some few verses of Scripture! How refreshing, like drops of rain, a favourite hymn! It is well to be supplied with light and portable copies of the Psalms, or of one Gospel or Epistle; with some book of devotion, some collection of hymns. And such should be

light to hold, for the sick are weak, and of a type legible and clear. Shall I not mention what may seem trifling to one in robust health but are no trifles to one of shattered nerve or pain-stricken frame? A rustling dress, creaking shoes, or creaking door hinge; whispering which excites suspicion; vigorous poking of the fire, these are *not* trifles; to thrust a lighted candle suddenly into the eyes of one blinded with pain, with the startling question "How do you feel?" is cruelty. Suddenly to draw up a blind and let in a flood of light on one who cannot bear much light; to throw open a window without asking leave; all these things distress. I was once so reduced by sickness, and my nervous system was so impaired, that the noise (!) made by pouring out a glass of water brought on convulsions! Of course, I am aware that it is very seldom you meet with instances amongst the poor of a highly sensitive nature, for they work more with hand than brain. Still there are few forms of illness which are not affected by attention or indifference to these details. At least we may suggest that a dress that does not rustle, a shoe that does not creak may be worn. A poker made of wood, or paper bags of coal, prevent noise. There is much in the arrangement of light. Shifting a bed into a different position, a change of room, has been attended with relief. Is there

nothing in learning and teaching others how to arrange pillows, telling them of simple recipes for the sick, of varieties of ways of cooking the same thing, of varying diet, and thus humouring what sometimes seems capricious and fanciful, and tempting the appetite ? It is of use to learn how to make such things as beef-tea, barley-water, toast and water, lemonade, gruel and other light drinks. Our *répertoire* is very limited compared with the numerous "*tisanes*" made from different herbs, and used so largely by the French. Jelly *dissolved* can often be taken by a patient averse to it in its more solid form. It is not every one who knows how to make a poultice of mustard, bread, or linseed ; how to dress a burn or blister, how to apply simple remedies. The poor are, as a rule, very ignorant of recipes, and still more ignorant of symptoms. On one occasion when I was visiting in my district in London, during the prevalence of small-pox, a man assured me his child was seriously ill with this loathsome malady ; he pointed out to me that it had developed itself in the child's *arm*, and on examination I discovered it was a highly successful case of vaccination ! Some little practical knowledge is very valuable, both in the discernment of illness and of such simple remedies as can be used until medical advice can be procured. It serves also to allay panic or unnecessary alarm. Hence the

value of *calmness* in visiting the sick. Avoid a bustling manner, hurried ways, and hasty movements. *Be calm and quiet with the sick.* There is much groundless fear about visiting the sick. Some are deterred from taking a district through fear of contracting sickness or bringing it home. I do not say that there are not sicknesses, *e.g.*, scarlet-fever, which are known to be highly contagious. I doubt if a mother of a family is justified in visiting a case of malignant scarlet-fever. There is a saying that if there be a cobweb in the room where scarlet-fever is, it will lodge there. And as regards small-pox, I would doubt if it is prudent, even in the path of duty, to visit this terrible scourge in its worst forms without having been recently vaccinated. But with the exception of one or two maladies, the sick may be visited with impunity, provided we take ordinary precautions. Medical men visit the worst forms of illness in the exercise of their calling, and the cases are rare of their falling victims to any prevailing sickness. Nurses in hospitals are hourly brought in contact with disease. And so we, clergy and visitors, may hope that, in the path of duty, and at the same time not despising well-understood precautionary rules, we may visit the sick with impunity. It is well to avoid inhaling the breath, for it is thus much of the poison is carried off the system; and to come

as little as possible into close contact with those illnesses which are popularly thought to be contagious. I have not much faith in camphor-bags secretly worn as so many disinfecting charms. I do not like the idea of going *armed* against disease into a sick-room; but I believe it is not wise to visit on an empty stomach, and that it is well that the attention of the stomach should be directed to digesting a mutton chop rather than contracting illness. This is much more its proper business to be strictly attended to. Avoid giving the sick, therefore, the impression that you are *afraid* of being in their room. The God who has sent you will surely protect you. Nor must we leave this subject without urging upon you to be *patient*; patient in listening to the sick man's tale; patient with their fretfulness or impatience. Be kind and gentle in manner. Illness is very real, and even where it is imaginary the *malade imaginaire* is to be *pitied*. Be full of sympathy. The kind word, the kind look, the expression of pity goes a long way. I am not sure it is not equal to at least *one* dose of a tonic "to be taken every four hours." And your example will not be unnoticed. By degrees the roughest and most rude will recognise its power.

I have not left time for speaking about the way in which you may encourage economy and thrift in housekeeping, and teach the poor how to make

the most of a little. Our poor in this respect are not as the poor abroad, where the *pot-au-feu* is an institution in every family, and many a savoury dish is served as a contrast to our more coarse or ill-cooked fare. The "British Workman" rings the changes on bacon and ham, cheese and beef. "I suppose," I once said to a butcher, "that when I give an order for meat, that poor woman asks for those scraps at 6d. a pound for her starving family?" (a poor Frenchwoman would make a grand dish out of them.) "Ah! no, sir," was his reply, "they always ask for the prime cut, or for steak." Well, it may be that their instinct tells them that this is more nutritious; it would be for *one*, but it would be but a mouthful amongst many. A *very* young couple were married at the parish church a few mornings ago, the boy nineteen, the girl eighteen, both of the artisan class. I thought, "What will their *ménage* be? Or what do these children, one from her loom, the other from his work, know about *housekeeping*, and how to make the most of their money in procuring those necessities of life which, as long as body and soul have to be kept together, admits of economy in their purchase and use?" There are several cheap publications written for the express purpose of giving hints to the poor in cooking. Of late, also, schools of cookery have been established with the same end, and we can, at least, make these known.

In all these and many other ways you may be of real help.

You must be prepared to find that your hints and advice are not adopted and acted upon. People are very prejudiced all the world over. If they have cooked in one way, they do not like of a sudden to try your plan. If one medicine has done them good, they are slow to think that another will do them more. We all cling to our own ways. Do not therefore be vexed if they "hear, but obey not." You have your prejudices, so have they. But do all, not in a patronising, but a kindly spirit; as a friend, not as a patron. And surely in visiting the sick we are gainers. We ought to learn some lesson for ourselves. It is often in sick-rooms that we see the greatest triumphs of *gracé*. It is in sick-rooms the disappointment of unbelief is confessed. It is in moments of weakness that the soul's truest instincts are put forth. "When I am in heaviness I will think upon God," is true of those who in days of health practically forget Him. I have never come across an instance of a man braving out his infidelity to the last. Men crave for the mercy which in life they despised. We see how true it is that man needs a Saviour. We see that nothing but the Gospel of Jesus Christ can give peace. This we learn in sick-rooms. And then, surely, every sickness is a shadow cast

on our path of our last and mortal sickness. It ought to remind us in health that we shall one day lie on the bed of sickness, shall ourselves need loving care, tender ministrations, gentle sympathy. And shall not this exercise of our ministry inspire the prayer, "Teach us to see how frail and uncertain our own condition is, and so to remember our days, that we may seriously apply our hearts to that holy and heavenly wisdom whilst we live here, which may in the end bring us to life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord?"

THE GREAT VICTORIES.

IN the trials to be suffered
In the fellowship with care,
'Tis the hidden inward struggle
That will prove the worst to bear.

'Tis the strife that no man pities,
'Tis the cry that no man hears,
'Tis the victory unpeaned
But by secret sobs and tears.

Oh, my friends, when God's great angel
Sounds aloud the deeds of might,
On the day when hearts are opened
In the holy Father's sight,—

Then the greatest deeds and noblest
Will be those unheard-of now,
Hidden under silent heart-beats
And an uncomplaining brow :

Deeds of patient self-rejection

Wrung from hearts that made no moan, —

Tender hearts, that, like the Master's,

“Trode the winepress all alone.”

Hearts that purer grew, and fairer,

In the struggle day by day,

Learning thus from holy teachers

How to suffer and to pray.

AMERICAN.

ADDRESS TO DISTRICT VISITORS.

IV.

VISITING FROM THE PHYSICAL POINT OF VIEW.

IN former addresses I have dwelt on district visiting in the *social*, *benevolent*, and *medicinal* point of view. I propose to occupy your attention to-day with district visiting in a *physical* point of view, and this is an aspect of your work not to be despised. We are all familiar with the adage, "Cleanliness is next to godliness." "Even from the body's purity the mind receives a secret sympathetic aid." We learn lessons of cleanliness from Nature. "With what care and attention," writes Rumford, "do the feathered race wash themselves and put their plumage in order. Singing birds are always remarkable for the neatness of their plumage. So great is the effect of cleanliness upon man, that it extends even to his moral character. Virtue never dwelt long with filth; nor do I believe there ever was a person scrupulously attentive to cleanliness who was a consum-

mate villain." The latter statement may perhaps be disputed. We must not make so doubtful a statement as that no very dirty person cannot be very good, though he may not be very sweet, and, on the other hand, many notorious criminals have been known to be scrupulously careful about their dress and appearance on the very morning of their execution. But there can be no doubt that cleanliness and godliness have a near and subtle connection. The conditions of life with which our poorer classes are for the most part surrounded in our large and populous towns are very depressing. It is true that they are not, as a rule, as alive to their discomforts as persons are who live under different conditions. They have become, as we say, "*used*" to dirt and smell. They are, mercifully no doubt, not quick to detect bad drains. The senses are blunted. It is surely of the nature of compensation that they who live in crowded and fetid rooms should not be conscious of the pervading fragrance, as a stranger coming out of the fresh air, and from a sitting room with, it may be, some sweet flowers perfuming it, would be. I have even heard it said that "dirt is as good as a great-coat to a poor man." I need not explain why! It is equally certain that people do not like to be spoken to on these matters, any more than they like to be reminded of their sins. There are

who are really offended with you if you say, "Are you aware that there is a very bad smell in this room? I think something must have gone wrong with your drain." They would like to say, "Keep your nose, as well as your remarks, to yourself." At the same time, a house may become a centre of mischief over a large neighbourhood; and however people may like what is unwholesome for themselves and resent "poking your nose into other people's matters," it is not fair that others should suffer. Now I do not say that you are to be so many "sanitary inspectors," nor do I deny that it is very difficult to approach people on this subject. It is as difficult as it is to approach people on the subject of a besetting sin. Still you may encourage habits of cleanliness by hearty commendation when you see some poor woman striving to keep her little home bright and clean; and prizes offered for the best and cleanest-kept house would go a long way to induce and foster the habit of cleanliness. You cannot too frequently bear in mind that "every Englishman's house is his castle," and he has a perfect right to be dirty if he prefer it. It is not for you to *find fault*, to censure, or even appear "interfering." But you can, if you care about it yourself, and are possessed of ordinary tact, tell them that clothes huddled in a heap cannot but harbour

infection ; that to separate them is to let air wash them ; that instead of allowing refuse to accumulate, or throwing it out of the window on the street, decaying vegetable is best put on the top of the fire ; that no harm can come of it there ; that a good dusting down makes a room always fresh, and that an open window, at *top and bottom*, after a night spent in a crowded sleeping room, is a wonderful and heaven-arranged purifier. Air not thus occasionally purified and *changed* becomes charged with gases given off the lungs, and given off because really deleterious, and the simplest of all known recipes for the poison of carbonic-acid gas is *an open window*. This is of particular importance in those cases where, as is common with the poor, the bed occupies a recess in the room used during the day. Even though there are other rooms in the house, I believe they are not habitually occupied, for the sake of economy or warmth. To have a bed in the room ordinarily occupied is preferred. It is all the more necessary, therefore, to point out the need of thorough ventilation. The bedding cannot otherwise be aired, and it cannot but be prejudicial to health to sleep in a bed unwashed, if not by water, yet by air. How important also to do anything that lies in your power to discourage *overcrowding* in sleeping rooms. I cannot here dilate on

the evils which, it is obvious, must result from the herding together of the sexes in small rooms. It is well known that this is a fruitful cause of the gravest immorality, and must destroy all sense of delicacy. Apart from this, a certain amount of breathing space is absolutely required by each individual, and overcrowding must be harmful. There is even still a strong prejudice in many minds against vaccination. But this is no reason why you should not be particular about it, in your own case, in the event of an epidemic of the frightful malady of small-pox, and in the case of all children who have not been vaccinated. An epidemic of small-pox broke out in a parish of which I was Vicar, and I went in and out with impunity amongst some of the most virulent forms of this loathsome disease, but I took care to be re-vaccinated. It is very true that we may hope a kind Providence watches over us all in the path of duty, but we are not encouraged to despise ordinary precautions, and thus tempt Providence. The same rule applies to visiting infectious cases. It must be a very special call or case that justifies the mother of a family personally visiting cases of some of the more infectious maladies. I for one doubt that she is in any case justified in doing so; but if she does, or when any district visitor does, they should take *every* precaution which experience

suggests, or has proved effectual. One golden rule is to avoid coming in contact with the *breath* of a person stricken with contagious disease. I know this from an experience which nearly cost me my life, when visiting a person in the Hospital Beaujon, in Paris. I was administering Holy Communion to her, and just before she died she seemed to have something on her mind which she wished to say to me. I put my face very near to hers, for she was almost inaudible, and I shall never forget that moment! I felt poisoned, and but for strong and instant remedies it might have proved fatal. Always take a short walk after visiting a fever case, and change your clothes on coming home. Suggest to the poor some of the more simple disinfectants, pre-eminently, I believe, carbolic acid; and show them how to use it. If you know of a case of fever, or other infectious disease in a family, be sure and let the master or mistress of the day-school and the teacher in the Sunday-school know of it, for prevention is better than cure. There is no doubt that fevers are spread by children being thoughtlessly or selfishly allowed by their parents to go to school when they ought not to have gone. Every parish has its sanitary inspector, whose *duty* it is to attend to nuisances. You help him to do his work more efficiently when you report to the parochial autho-

rities a bad drain, or any nuisance which ought for the sake of others to be without delay removed. I might dwell on much more, and doubtless more has suggested itself to yourselves. I hope I have sufficiently indicated, in a general way, what I mean by the *physical* aspect of district visiting. These matters, it is true, have nothing spiritual in them, but they are not therefore unimportant. Familiarity with what is coarse, uncleanly, and unseemly has its effect on the mind, ways, and "conversation" of those who are brought up amidst such associations. They become rude in speech, rough in ways, ill-mannered and "brusque." Disregard of the common decencies of life touches closely on morality. That which we should endeavour as far as possible to preserve cannot be maintained amidst scenes of overcrowding, and so forth. Much disease is preventible, and we are bound to do what we can to obey law and act on the dictates of common-sense and common prudence. It is a duty to take care of our own health and to avoid needless exposure to danger. And by being particular about vaccination, preventing the spread of infection, and so far as we can helping to keep homes pure and bright, we are in so many words teaching the poor to remember that "no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth

to himself;" that there is a duty we owe one to another by which we learn consideration, and unlearn selfishness, and "in doing as we would be done by," we act on the Lord's own words, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Thy love

Shall chant itself its own beatitudes,
After its own life working. A child-kiss
Set on thy sighing lips shall make thee glad ;
A poor man served by thee shall make thee rich ;
A sick man helped by thee shall make thee shine,
Thou shalt be served thyself by every sense
Of service which thou renderest.

E. B. BROWNING.

ADDRESS TO DISTRICT VISITORS.

V.

VISITING FROM THE ECONOMICAL POINT OF VIEW.

I PURPOSE to treat the subject of district visiting to-day from an *economical* point of view, and by this I would have you to understand all that can encourage the poor in habits of self-respect, frugality, thrift, and industry. There can be no doubt that not only very much has to be done, but that very much may be done in this direction. I do not know that the poorer classes are less thrifty than classes above them in the social scale. It is easy for persons of large income to "put by;" it is not always possible for persons of moderate income to do so, considering how all the necessities of life are continually rising in value. It is still more difficult for those to save who have fixed wages, limited hours of employment, and increasing families. If we are not ourselves in the habit of saving, we must be very careful how we censure others who are not saving. In this, as in other

matters, discretion and tact must be exercised. Again, you must remember that at best, and even in the most prosperous times, it is not much that the poor can save. There is rent, food, clothing, schooling to be paid, and where the family is large, there cannot be much left when these essentials are satisfied. Still a good deal of so-called "distress" is, humanly speaking, preventible, or may be considerably mitigated. All are well aware how much money is spent by the poorer classes in "drink." The statistics in connection with the sale of intoxicating liquors are almost incredible. It is this expenditure in the single article of "drink" which has much to do with the recent depression in trade, and lies at the root of the wretchedness of many poverty-stricken homes amongst our poor. You see this every day. To dwell upon what everywhere meets your eye were superfluous. I am persuaded you should give as little countenance as possible to the idle, the drunkard, and the profligate. Mrs. Hook, in one of her letters to Dean Hook, wisely says, "There is sometimes as much religion in refusing as in giving." The remarks of Mr. Robertson, of Brighton, are well worth repeating here: "Indiscriminate almsgiving is injurious both to the giver and the receiver; to the giver, as it encourages indolence; to the receiver, as it prevents independence and exertion. There

may be true liberality when a man gives nothing to religious societies. Suppose he spends his money in employing labour wisely, suppose he gives good wages, suppose he invests capital in enterprises which call out the highest qualities—then such a man, although directly giving nothing, indirectly gives much, and is charitable in the true sense of the word.” There is no more difficult subject in connection with our parochial ministrations, and one which more requires firmness and judgment, than that of the distribution of alms. You cannot supply the drunkard with means for gratifying his lust, and yet you cannot see his innocent wife and family starve. It is always more difficult to refuse than to give; to say “no” than to say “yes.” In the case of a drunken husband or wife, our safest plan is to relieve *in kind*, and on no account to give money, especially money consecrated to God in Holy Communion. Again, where you observe that that is kept which it must cost something to keep and which is not necessary, you are justified in withholding relief. The guardians of the poor not long ago declined, very properly, to give relief in a particular instance, where a man was found to have a bull-dog which he fed more than he fed his family. A man has a perfect right to have a bull-dog, but he has no right to expect others to keep it for him. This

I give only as an illustration of my meaning. And of how great importance it is to show the poor how they may help themselves. Stir them up to habits of *self-respect*. The shilling earned is better than the shilling given. See if you cannot give a day's work for one who wants relief and is willing to work. The willingness to work is a great test. "If any will not work, neither let him eat." You have the Bible on your side. You may be able to give a day's work in your garden, or some needlework, or employ a poor and trustworthy woman as a charwoman. I do not doubt that many ways will suggest themselves in which you may give work, and in this way really help the needy. It will be worth your while in thinking over your district to think how you may alleviate distress or lighten care, without at the same time imperilling independence. Suppose you have some very poor family, might you not do something for them at home; sewing for them, and encouraging your children to do so, thus doing something *for* your district, when from any circumstances you are not able to be *in* your district? In proportion as you can encourage a spirit of *self-respect* you discourage the spirit of "begging." Do what lies in your power to promote frugality, which means *thrift*, "good husbandry." A practical housekeeper will be at no loss to know

in what respects frugality may be exercised. It is very remarkable how wasteful the poor, who have least to waste, are. Speak sometimes of the excellence of *industry*. "A man," says Whateley, "who gives his children habits of industry, provides for them better than by giving them a fortune." "The servant," says Fuller, "employed in making and blowing of the fire, oft-times getteth by his pains a more kindly and continuing heat than the master himself who sitteth down by the same; and thus persons, industriously occupying themselves, thrive better on a little of their own honest getting than lazy heirs on the large revenues left unto them." This touches also the question of "*strikes*," one which unless you thoroughly understand in all its bearings you had as well not discuss. In connection with the important subject before us, I may mention that in the event of the branch of the Charity Organisation Society being established in the parish, you will find in its operations a great safeguard against imposition. The society also lends small sums of money, to be returned in small payments; and while there is a greater willingness to lean on private alms than to look to public institutions for help, it is our duty to point out the various methods in which persons willing to help themselves may be helped. Together with encouraging the poor in your several districts to "lay by,"

it is, I am persuaded, advisable to have a stated time for collecting the savings. It is not always easy to keep money. I need hardly point out the great and tried value of *penny banks*. One of these ought to be instituted in connection with every mission room, and the curate in charge, aided with one or two laymen, could readily organise and work these. The *provident society* is another excellent agency which district visitors may largely encourage. The *mothers' meeting* is a favourable opportunity for collecting savings, and for dwelling on the advantages of thrift. The burial club, while no doubt open to grave abuse, may be mentioned amongst the various methods in which the poor may be assisted without loss of self-respect and resorting to begging; and this leads me to say how desirable it is to discourage, as far as we may, extravagance on the occasion of *funerals*. How much money is spent on these occasions which might well be saved! All well know, and to a certain extent will appreciate, the motive which actuate the poor to make no little sacrifice in order that their friends and relatives may have a decent burial; on the other hand, we know that the fear of "what neighbours will think and say," leads many to go beyond what is prudent and necessary. Do not think these matters unimportant. Nothing that is in the direction of either good or ill is un-

important. I want to help you to make your visiting amongst the poor of practical good, and that you should give reality to it, so that it never becomes perfunctory, by suggesting to you such topics as these. And you must remember that they have their place in the Christian system. "He that provideth not for his own is worse than an infidel." Bringing before the poor the various methods of helping themselves is to remind them of a first duty towards those of their own household; that husband, wife, children, are their first and proper care. It is well also to remind them that almsgiving is the privilege of the poor as well as of the rich. The widow's mite was not despised. "She hath done what she could," was the Master's own commendation of a single act of love. We ought to encourage our poor to give, if it be only a penny, to the good cause of our Saviour, and to remind them that in Holy Communion they have frequent opportunity of bringing their offering to God.

"REDEEMING THE TIME."

Two paces,—then the goal :

Two little steps at most,—

Then life is gone, and heaven is won,

Or else, alas, 'tis lost !

Two paces : brief the space,

By hasty feet soon trod ;

And yet what wondrous room it leaves
For love to work for God !

There's time for faith to trust,
For holy zeal to glow ;
There's ample time for walk with God,—
To serve His will below.

How many an aching heart
That breathes its sigh alone,
Might earnest love contrive to soothe
Ere life's brief term be gone !

How many a careless one,
That lies in death of sin,
Might one alive who works with God
For Christ and glory win !

Two paces : that is all !
My soul, be wise at length ;
Fling vain regrets and hopes away,—
The present needs thy strength.

Two paces : nothing more !
True life must live in haste :
There's barely time to do its work,
But now there's none to waste.

J. D.

ADDRESS TO DISTRICT VISITORS.

VI.

VISITING FROM AN EDUCATIONAL POINT OF VIEW.

MY address on our last occasion of meeting was on district visiting from an *economical* point of view. I endeavoured to point out how you may encourage habits in the poor of self-respect, thrift, and frugality. I dwelt on the various ways in which they may save, and of the advantages of *Penny Banks, Provident Societies, and Mothers' Meetings*. I took occasion to make a few suggestions with respect to the distribution of alms and needless expense at funerals. To-day I would speak of district visiting from an *educational* point of view, and I would encourage you to do what in you lies to set before parents the duty of sending their children to school. The cost of education is very trifling. It is little more than the price of a glass of beer to the working man. There is practically now no excuse for the poor not sending their children to school. I would say, encourage them to

send their children to our own national schools. If the fee be trifling and the education good why should they go elsewhere? Is it not of importance that we should, as long as possible, maintain our own schools? And here I cannot do better than quote the words of our own diocesan. "The real ground upon which I urge the clergy to retain their schools, wherever it is possible, is this: A clergyman who without an absolute necessity ceases to take an active share in the management of his parochial school abdicates one important function of his office. Our Blessed Lord gave this commission to His Apostles, 'Feed My sheep, feed My lambs.' That responsibility has been in its measure transmitted from link to link along the whole chain of the ministry of Christ's Church. It follows that every spiritual pastor in charge of a parish is under a sacred obligation not only to feed the flock committed to his oversight with the wholesome food of the Word of God; he is not less bound to take care that the lambs of the flock are instructed out of the Sacred Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

"Nor can a clergyman discharge this part of his duty by handing over his elementary school to the management of a School Board. I will first look at the *possible* result, as respects religious

instruction, of his so doing. What is the *possible*? —I do not say the inevitable, or the uniform—but what is the *possible* result? He may hand over the lambs of his flock, whom he is bound to educate in the fear of God, to a system of teaching from which religious instruction is altogether and most carefully excluded. And if this be so, the first duty towards every baptized child, to provide that it may be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and Christian life, is abandoned, the season of childhood and early youth, the most precious of all opportunities for sowing the seed of eternal life, is worse than wasted, and the soil which, by pious care and diligence, might have yielded fruits of righteousness, is left to its natural degeneracy and corruption, and is fertile only in sin and unbelief. Such, I say, is the *possible* result. It would be wrong to overlook the fact, that it is by no means every School Board by which religious teaching is forbidden. There are School Boards in existence which go quite as far as the Act of 1870 will allow, in prescribing that religion shall be taught in the schools over which they have control. But we must not lose sight of this fact: School Boards are liable to triennial election. The policy of one Board may be reversed by its successor. Hence there is no guarantee, even if religious teaching is permitted by the School Board this year,

that it will be so permitted the next, and therefore it comes round to this again, that in handing over a church school to the management of a School Board, it is not merely that a clergyman abdicates one part of his duty, to care for the children of his flock, but he places them under a system of instruction which affords no security that they shall learn that which, above all things else, it concerns them to know—how to pass the things temporal so as not to lose the things eternal.

“To this I would add, the religious teaching in Church schools is definite and in conformity with standards of faith and doctrine taken from the Holy Scriptures, whereas the religious instruction given in Board schools, taken at best, is meagre and indefinite. For all these reasons I earnestly deprecate the surrender of church elementary schools to the management of School Boards. I firmly believe there is no wish on the part of the poor themselves to have their children educated without religion. They would prefer to have them taught the Bible, and it would be a happy day for the nation if ever the religious sense of the country should so make itself felt as to cause the Legislature to take away the option, which at present is given in School Boards, of determining whether or not the Bible shall be taught in schools over which they have control.”

I feel there is nothing I can add to this clear and lucid statement of the case. Do not forget to remind those you visit of our *Sunday school*, in which definite teaching is given, and a legitimate influence exercised to attach scholars to the Church. Our *mission rooms*, with their various classes, are also favourable opportunities in the same direction, and the young of both sexes might be persuaded to attend these. How very important it is to endeavour to counteract the vicious tendency of cheap, bad literature by the antidote in every parish of a *lending library*, with healthy and instructive literature. I questioned our school-master as to how much, in his opinion, children passing through our school retained in after life of what they had learned. He said, "They as a rule forget history and geography, and remember only enough of arithmetic for daily use; what they do retain is *reading*, and in this they are greatly helped by cheap literature, in other words, reading is kept up." Can we exaggerate the importance of placing within the reach of the poorer classes good as well as cheap literature? The name is "legion" of such publications. "Hand and Heart;" "The Day of Rest;" "Sunday at Home;" "Leisure Hours;" "Friendly Leaves;" "The Boy's Companion," these are but a sample of the many publications now written. I may call attention also to our

local parochial magazine, edited by one well known for his efforts to improve the tone of reading amongst the working classes, the Rev. Erskine Clarke. Our magazine not only gives such local information as may be interesting, but it supplies, at the low price of twopence, excellent literature of the class to which I am specially alluding. *Night schools*, the *Girls' Friendly Society* recently established in our parish, *Science and Art lectures*, these and many more are amongst the opportunities and facilities the working classes in our day enjoy, advantages unknown to their forefathers. "I have no sympathy," writes Chalmers, "with those who would grudge our workmen and our common people the very highest acquisitions which their tastes, or their time, or their inclinations would have them to realise; for next to the salvation of their souls, I certainly say that the object of my fondest aspiration is the moral and intellectual, and as a mere consequence of this, the economical advancement of the working classes, the same object, which of all others in the wide range of political speculations, is the one which should be the dearest to the heart of every philanthropist and every true patriot." It is not out of your power to do something in the direction of raising the tone in your district. I have briefly suggested some few of the many ways in which cheap and

good literature may counteract the baneful and often demoralising effects of low and immoral publications, and it certainly does come within the scope and even duties of a district visitor to do what lies in her power to discourage what is evil and promote what is good even in this point of view, and our warrant for this is that Word of God with which we close these remarks.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

AMONG THE FLOWERS.

BY A CURATE.

WE took them to the woods one day
When the summer woods were gay,
At the flowery close of May,
Saying, “Children, run and play!”

And they hardly understood
They might wander where they would;
And it seemed a doubtful good
That on very flowers they stood,—

Flowers too precious in the sight
Of these children,—priceless quite!
One a king-cup, shining bright,
Held as if she held a light!

Every bank with treasure teemed ;
Daisies silver coinage seemed,
Dandelions, starry-beamed,
Like to bright gold pieces gleamed.

Of primroses lingering there,
One would weave a garland fair ;
One would fill her lap with care
And a miser's anxious air.

From the city's slums they came,
Flowerless, dark, and full of shame,
Full of foulness without name,—
Homes, alas, and hearts the same !

"Feed my lambs," said Christ one day :
So we took them out to play ;
For the young lambs God doth lay
Down among the flowers of May.

From the Sunday Magazine.

ADDRESS TO DISTRICT VISITORS.

VII.

VISITING FROM A MORAL POINT OF VIEW.

OUR last address treated District Visiting from an *educational* point of view. I endeavoured to point out to you different ways in which you might bring before the poor in your several districts, not only the many *advantages* of education, but the many *facilities* which the present day affords for promoting healthy literature; facilities, apparatus, and opportunities unknown to our forefathers. I have to view your work to-day from another point of view, and that is the *moral* as distinct from any of the foregoing. And here again you can be at no loss for a theme, and at no loss for opportunity. You cannot but be painfully conscious of many evils which operate prejudicially on the mind, and which assist in encouraging habits amongst the poor which are most formidable obstacles to any attempt to improve their condition. If there be, perhaps, one vice more prevalent than another,

VISITING FROM A MORAL POINT OF VIEW.

and which strikes more deeply at the root of our national prosperity and of domestic comfort, it is the vice of intemperance. Go where you will you hear the same sad and saddening story. I venture to think that there will be but few amongst the poor you visit who are not to some extent victims of this besetting sin. Pauperism and drunkenness are as cause and effect. The wages of the working classes are good. Where in your districts do you see the model home of the model British working man? You could count such homes on your fingers. How much of wages is spent in drink? What is there to show for all the money earned and paid in wages? It would astonish many a working man if he were to count up at the end of a year how much he has spent on what is not a *necessary* of life, and is nothing more, in many cases, than sensual indulgence. And what is the result? Pauperism, and pauperism means for us increased taxation; it means for the intemperate manifold privations and penalties. We have crimes that can be attributed only to drink; we have the homes of the poor bereft of all that makes them worthy of the word *home*; we have brutal husbands, thriftless wives, ragged children; and in nine cases out of ten all may be attributed to this accursed drink. Can you do nothing? You can endeavour to persuade the drunkard or tippler to take the pledge. You

DISTRICT VISITING.

by about with you relief in the form of a
or a good meal at the Cocoa House, such
now being so generally established. You
persuade the children to join a Band of Hope ;
can religiously withhold from the family of the
drunkard alms consecrated at Holy Communion.
The more you give to a drunkard's family, the
more you encourage the drunkard in his sin. You
can point out not only the social evils, and the
present penalties of breaking God's laws, but
you can point out that drunkenness is a SIN,
and that the drunkard can have no place in the
kingdom of God. You can do more. *By your own
example as a total abstainer*, you can go to the
drunkard with power and say, "I give this up to
show that it can be done without injury to one
who has never abused stimulants. You use them
to your hurt." And is it not *worth while*, for
the sake of winning another from an evil way, to
exercise some little self-denial? Is it not part of
His cross whose cross we profess to carry? No
real work is done for God except at the cost of
self-denial. "If any man will come after Me, let
him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow
Me."

There are other evils against which you can
warn. There are who are living in sin. They are
not married. Where such a case comes to your

knowledge, do all in your power to persuade them to be married. If they urge the difficulty of paying the fees, you may urge that the people who can afford to live together in sin, can afford to pay the small fee that they may live together without sin. Do not mince words with such. To live as man and wife, and yet not in holy wedlock, is grievous sin, and there is no possible excuse for it. What must be the effect on the minds of the children of such unholy and unblest unions? Not only does an ineffaceable stigma attach to them, but they may think that in the years to come to be married is not necessary. So again there is a familiarity amongst the young of both sexes in our manufacturing towns, productive of no little evil and immorality. They are thrown much together in hours of labour, and are for the most part as free from as they become independent of restraint. It is remarkable to notice the spirit of independence of authority that comes with being able to earn your own livelihood. A boy or girl earning a few shillings a week soon sets father or mother at defiance. He or she has enough to live on, and they will do as they list. Respect for authority, reverence for parents, is in our days becoming more and more rare. This soon shows itself in the choice of amusements, and in consorting at late hours with friends. It leads to much from which

every modest girl should instinctively shrink, as sensitive plants shrink from the rude touch of a man's hand. We clergy are often painful witnesses of the results of such familiarity. Too many come to be married to save their reputation. You may do some good, especially in taking an interest in the young. Bible classes, sewing classes, personal and affectionate interest in the young, all this is of a preventive character. The girls and young men's Friendly Societies are all helps in the same direction. You can dissuade them from frequenting theatres or low music halls, and if you cannot altogether prevent evil, you have at least done your utmost to do so. And so I might dilate and dwell on many evils ; such as gambling, frequenting races (a fruitful source of demoralisation), Sabbath-breaking, profanity, using bad language to or before little children, encouraging anything that is coarse, indelicate, and unseemly, anything in dress that is out of keeping with one's station in life, or wanton and wasteful. These things are of evil, and some one must deal with and be more or less plain-spoken about them. And how are you to do this, so that you shall not be unheeded, or your words be not resented, because your reproof or advice savours of interference, and that you shall so speak as to gain a hearing? There are two ways, at least, of doing anything.

All have not what is called *tact*. It is a moral *sense*. Talent knows *what* to do, tact knows *how* and when to do it. There are disagreeable ways of doing good. There are who do no good, because they attempt to do it in a way that offends; and so the Apostle very wisely says, "Let not your good be evil spoken of." Some people patronise, and that riles; or they assume the office of a preceptor, and that is distasteful; or they speak as from some higher platform, and that will not do; or they are singularly unhappy in the way they speak. All their intentions are good; they mean well; but when you have said they are *wanting in tact*, you have given the reason for their failure. If some have to pray for a thick skin, that they may be delivered from *unreasonable* as well as from wicked men, others have to pray for "*tact*." Manners are something with every one, and everything with some. It has been well said, "It is not enough to be good, you must be *gracious* as well as good." Every one has rights and feelings. Gentleness and love will work miracles. If you wish to do good do it in your Master's spirit—despise, expose, decry the hypocrite, but be patient, tender, forbearing, loving with the sinner. Do not scold, or get angry. Controversy rarely works conviction. Recommend what you say by your manner, by your tone, by your evident singleness

of purpose, and above all, by your life. Be a witness for God, not in a spirit of self-righteousness, but in that lowly spirit which is one evidence of God's grace in your own heart, and which will give effect and weight to your words, and in all your intercourse with evil, and in your efforts to grapple with it, bear this text in mind, "Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one to a spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

THINK GENTLY OF THE ERRING!

THINK gently of the erring !

Ye know not of the power
With which the dark temptation came
In some unguarded hour.

Ye may not know how earnestly
They struggled, or how well,
Until the hour of weakness came,
And sadly thus they fell.

Think gently of the erring !

Oh ! do not thou forget,
However darkly stained by sin,
He is thy brother yet.
He is of the self-same heritage,
Child of the self-same God ;
He has but stumbled in the path
Thou hast in weakness trod.

Speak gently to the erring !

For is it not enough
That innocence and peace have gone
Without thy censure rough ?

It sure must be a weary lot
That sin-stained heart to bear,
And those who share a happier fate,
Their chidings well may spare.

Speak gently to the erring !
Thou yet may'st lead them back
With holy words and tones of love
From misery's thorny track.
Forget not thou hast often sinned,
And sinful yet must be ;
Deal gently with the erring, then,
As God has dealt with thee.

ADDRESS TO DISTRICT VISITORS.

VIII.

VISITING FROM A RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL POINT
OF VIEW.

IN the preceding addresses, which I have given at our monthly meetings, I have dwelt, as you will remember, on District Visiting from various points of view, no one of which could be said to be unimportant. There remains, however, one aspect of the subject, without which, so far as it is more or less kept in view, district visiting can be but of little *real* good—I mean, of course, the *religious and spiritual aspect* of your work. You may be kind, self-denying, zealous, and in many ways interested in the poor under your care. You may be always welcomed because of what you give, or because the poor feel they have in you one who can sympathise with them, and enter into their trials. And to do what is *ordinarily* done by a district visitor is facile. It is the outcome of kindly feeling. It is for the most part well received. It is rarely resented. To sit down and make yourself at home with them; to make inquiry into

their health and circumstances, and to relieve their wants; to suggest remedies in illness, to encourage cleanliness; to teach them to be industrious and thrifty; to see that their children attend school; and to give general advice, is all right and good, but it has nothing to do with their *spiritual* welfare. It is all more or less concerned with *this present* life, and their *temporal* well-being. It does not bring them face to face with those great questions which must have their place some day in the minds of all, rich or poor. Now you have to remember what a large proportion of our people go to no place of worship. It is difficult for us, trained and accustomed from our childhood to go to a place of worship, to conceive a life spent from year to year without the direct influences of religion. However, from whatever cause it arise, there is the fact, at all hands confessed, that those who frequent church or chapel are a mere handful compared with those who "go nowhere." What an opportunity, therefore, is yours! You may, under God, be the instrument of bringing them to Christ, as Andrew brought Peter, and this, not only and simply by leaving a tract, and thinking that all is done when that is done, but by yourself speaking to them of the things which concern their everlasting peace. To this end keep this in mind: there is much in keeping a definite

purpose more or less in mind. Who would prepare a sermon, much less attempt to preach it, without asking God's blessing upon it, and praying Him that His Word may not return void? The most successful clergymen, I know, in the best and truest sense, are men of prayer. The best district visitors I know are the fruit of "Missions," such as have been awakened to realise the value of their own soul and the love of Jesus for them, and that love has constrained them to speak to others. It is a good rule for a clergyman to lay down, never to go visiting without prayer. It is a good rule for a district visitor to observe, never to go into her district without a few words of secret prayer. Then again we have not so much to make opportunities as to expect them prepared for us; we have not so much to *seek* as to *watch for* openings. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia. In answer to prayer He would open hearts for you. You can always ask if there is a Bible, Prayer-book, or Hymn-book in the house. Sometimes you find children unbaptized or unconfirmed. Some of your poor are living in sin, and in a state of concubinage. Some never come to the Lord's Table. All these facts give opportunity for speaking of the Word of God, of Prayer, of Holy Baptism, of Sin and its penalties. Some service of interest has been held in the Parish Church, as, for

instance, the placing the old Colours of the Thirty-third yesterday in the Parish Church. Every one is speaking of it. It is to you a text. For the Christian life is one of war with sin. We have a special service for the blind, for the deaf and dumb. The poor are interested, and you can take up your parable. They are ill: you can say how every sickness is a shadow cast upon our path of the last sickness. They are in anxiety: you have many passages to quote of casting care on God, and of questioning them of the greatest care of all, of their souls' state in the sight of God. You have the teaching of special Church seasons. You need never be at a loss for giving a spiritual "turn" to a subject, and that without either appearing to preach or to assume the distinct work of the clergyman. Do not allow yourself to think that you must leave all spiritual work to the clergyman. *All* may be in one sense priests under God. *All* may be in one sense sons and daughters of consolation. You may try to win their souls, partly by direct teaching, as God the Holy Ghost has taught you, speaking earnestly and faithfully, and few, if any, will resent it. You can try to win them by making the clergyman as soon as possible aware of any one sick in mind or body. You can tell them of what is going on for God in the parish, or what is going to be done, and encourag-

ing them to get through their work a little earlier that they may be able to attend. You may sometimes offer to pray with them, and make your prayer for them the occasion of letting them hear and know what it is you feel they most need. If you do not *try* to win their souls, if you do not lay yourself out to do it, of what real profit is your visiting? They die! They enter into the presence of their God! Your opportunity is gone for ever, irrevocably! You go to their door; the blinds are down; "Please, madam, he died last night!" awaits you. And what word for Christ did you speak? What did a year's visiting do for that soul? How will much of District Visiting dwindle into nothingness in the hour of death, before the great white throne? Make use of your golden opportunity *now*. And why should not you be made a means of spiritual blessing? Others are. There are many everywhere, in every town, who are as salt, as leaven, as burning and shining lights. They toil quietly and unostentatiously, like worms in nature, which perforate the soil and make it porous, and prepare it for fertilising rain; so may you be *used* of God, if first you desire it, and next, if you pray that you may be.

" Oh ! use me, Lord, use even *me*,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where."

Make your visiting a matter of *definite prayer*

Make your people a matter of *definite prayer*. Do this in earnest. Put your whole heart into it, and go to your work, not only in a spirit of prayer, but in a spirit of faith. Sow the seed, and leave God to water it. Remember that no word spoken for Him is as if it had not been spoken. It does not return void: this is your comfort, your confidence, your reward. God wills the salvation of His creatures. He has revealed all truth necessary for our salvation. He uses us as instruments in His hands for communicating this saving knowledge to others. He can use *you*. Put yourself humbly, prayerfully, believingly into His Almighty hands. Commit your way unto the Lord, and He will bring it to pass: and if you look for it, how great, how blessed, is your reward! "He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

THE STARLESS CROWN.

"They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."—DANIEL xii. 3.

WEARIED and worn with earthly cares, I yielded to repose,
 And soon before my raptured sight, a glorious vision rose:
 I thought, whilst slumbering on my couch in midnight's solemn
 gloom,
 I heard an angel's silvery voice, and radiance filled my room.
 A gentle touch awakened me,—a gentle whisper said,
 "Arise, O sleeper, follow me;" and through the air we fled.

We left the earth, so far away that like a speck it seemed,
 And heavenly glory, calm and pure, across our pathway streamed.
 Still on we went,—my soul was rapt in silent ecstasy;
 I wondered what the end would be, what next should meet mine
 eye.

I knew not how we journeyed through the pathless fields of light,
 When suddenly a change was wrought, and *I was clothed in white*.
 We stood before a city's walls most glorious to behold;
 We passed through gates of glistening pearl, o'er streets of purest
 gold;

It needed not the sun by day, the silver moon by night;
 The glory of the Lord was there, the Lamb Himself its light.
 Bright angels paced the shining streets, sweet music filled the air,
 And white-robed saints with glittering crowns, from every clime
 were there:

And some that I had loved on earth stood with them round the
 throne,

"All worthy is the Lamb," they sang, "the glory His alone."

But fairer far than all beside, I saw my Saviour's face;

And as I gazed He smiled on me with wondrous love and grace.

Lowly I bowed before His throne, o'erjoyed that I at last

Had gained the object of my hopes; that earth at length was
 past.

And then in solemn tones He said, "Where is the diadem

That ought to sparkle on thy brow—adorned with many a gem?

I know thou hast believed on Me, and life through Me is thine,

But where are all those radiant stars that in thy crown should
 shine?

Yonder thou seest a glorious throng, and stars on every brow!

For every soul they led to Me they wear a jewel now!

And such *thy* bright reward had been if such had been thy *deed*,

If thou had'st sought some wandering feet in path of peace to lead.

I did not mean that thou should'st tread the way of life *alone*,

But that the clear and shining light which round thy footsteps
 shone,

Should guide some other weary feet to My bright home of rest,

And thus, in blessing those around, thou had'st thyself been blest."

* * * * *

The vision faded from my sight, the voice no longer spake,
A spell seemed brooding o'er my soul which long I feared to break;
And when at last I gazed around in morning's glimmering light,
My spirit fell o'erwhelmed beneath that vision's awful might.
I rose and wept with chastened joy that yet I dwelt below,
That yet another hour was mine, my faith by works to show;
That yet some sinner I might tell of Jesus' dying love,
And help to lead some weary soul to seek a home above.
And now, while on the earth I stay, my motto this shall be,
"To live no longer to myself but Him who died for me!"
And graven on my inmost soul this word of truth divine,
"They that turn many to the Lord bright as the stars shall shine."

J. L. H.

WOMAN'S WORK IN THE CHURCH.

PAPER READ BY INVITATION AT THE SHEFFIELD
CONGRESS, 1878.

WE may safely assume that they who assemble on such occasions as the present are not only healthily and actively interested in questions affecting the welfare, stability, resources, and extended usefulness of the Church of Christ, and have His cause warmly at heart, but that all are of one mind in the earnest conviction that God has created us for His glory, and that to few, if indeed any save such as are bereft of reason, is denied some opportunity of serving Him. Of each of us it may be said, "The Lord hath need of thee." Gifts and aptitudes may vary in ability and scope, but all are capable of consecration. Flowers and fruits are of varied fragrance and flavour, yet does not each fruit and flower answer the end of its creation? Birds not gifted with song have brilliant plumage, while some of the sweetest songsters are of sober and unattractive hue. Stars in space and glittering fire-flies; trees of tropical stature and moss on ruins; huge rocks from which alluvial soils are formed and microscopic shells in the ooze of the sea; waving

palms and slime in pools—each and all have their work and place. Waste of power and disuse of material are unknown in the domain of physics and the realm of nature. It is the practical lesson most frequently insisted upon in the Word of God, that “we are not our own, but are bought with a price,” that every redeemed life has by redemption passed into the possession of Christ, and that that life is only then lived truly and well in so far as it is consciously and definitely consecrated to God. That is our starting-point. And if this position be true, there must also be some work for each and all within the sphere of Christ’s kingdom :

“ In God’s great field of labour
 All work is not the same ;
 He hath a service for each one
 Who loves His holy name.”

To dwell on facts on all hands allowed, were needlessly to occupy our time. All well know the sin and want which unhappily abound. The statesman, philanthropist, clergyman, all who are ever seeking to solve great social problems or remedy great social evils, are daily confronted with the havoc sin has made and is making in our fallen world. But, on the other hand, the world is God’s great field in which He would have us be not loiterers but labourers. “ Sir, go work in My vineyard,” is the Master’s bidding. Is it so, or is it

not so, that our present machinery, limited and restricted in theory, fettered by conventionalism, impeded by prejudice, is unequal to grapple and cope with the sin, unbelief, and degradation of our day? Well may the clergy and their handful of helpers say, "What are we among so many?" Well may some faithlessly lose heart in apparently fruitless toil, or, toiling beyond their strength, sink into an early grave! Are we availing ourselves in the diocese or parish of *all* our available help? Have we taxed to the utmost the resources of willing hearts? Is there no rich vein left in the mine? Is there not some precious ore still unquarried? If, instead of laments and fruitless sighing and wringing of hands, we set earnestly to work and inquired if all material is being used in God's service as it might be used, would it not be more practical? In the presence of so much to appal and sadden, as well as so much to gladden and encourage, is not the time come when we, who are fully alive to the spiritual wants of our day, should be ready to put aside prejudice, if prejudice have hitherto stood in the way of our recognition of the work which women are so qualified by nature, when sanctified by grace, to do? Ought we not to be more of one mind in endeavouring to bring it about that a power, not used to the extent it might be used, should not only be recognised, but welcomed,

encouraged, organised, and used ? There should no more be waste in the spiritual than there is in the natural world. And yet how much power for God and for good, how much Christian influence, is lying dormant, is being lost irrevocably to the Church of Christ, not, I earnestly believe, because it is *withheld*, but in too many cases because it is not sought; not from *want of will*, but far more often from *want of opportunity* ! It is, I am persuaded, to do many a woman a great wrong to suppose that she would not be glad and thankful to be actively interested in her Redeemer's blessed service. I do not enlarge, tempting as is the theme, on what woman, seen in her happiest aspect, has been divinely endowed with; nor on those peculiar qualities and feminine gifts which, when consecrated to the highest of all purposes, are a real, penetrating, and in some cases resistless power for good. The pastor blessed with a godly wife as his never-failing help; the unmarried curate with his devoted sister; the layman united to one who exercises an influence fraught with blessing to his family and household: such as these well know of what woman, under God, is capable. And yet these represent but a tithe and fraction of the many who would be equally blessed to others were their energies directed into definite channels of usefulness, and were that enlisted into the standing army of dis-

ciplined and organised workers, which because not recognised is apt to become desultory. Women are considerably in excess of men ; and how many are living aimless, purposeless, if not wasted lives ? No use is being made of them. They have time at their command. The real difficulty is how to get through a day, not filled up with blessed toil. If they do not lavish and dissipate their affections on domestic pets ; if the work of fiction be not beguiling heavy hours ; if time be not distributed listlessly over meals, calls, and dressing, or taken up with domestic cares, yet with how many is the sacred trust of priceless hours but little realised ! The life, which wherever it moved might be casting its healing shadow, is hid under a bushel, and not set upon a candlestick. It is trifled away in nameless frivolities, so that when it all comes to an end, if they do not say it, yet the verdict that such pass on their ended life is the sad and sorrowful of her unhappy conviction, who ere she breathed her last, and the spirit returned to the God who gave it, said this to me—"I look back on my life now near its end, and my bitter reflection on my death-bed is, that I have never, throughout it all, done or said anything for Christ !" It is a serious and saddening consideration, how many women in our land have either no sense of their responsibility, or excuse inactivity on the ground that they feel

no call to spiritual or semi-spiritual work, forgetting that where there is the will God always points the way ; or else they too frequently, and not without truth, urge in justification of an apparently aimless life—"No man hath hired us." Allow a large margin for those whose first work lies at home, whose best "mothers' meeting" is their own nursery, and best "Bible class" their own children, whose domestic duties done in a sanctified spirit are of the nature of true religion. Yet how many there are who have no such ties in life as to exclude them from devoting themselves to the more familiar phases of Church work. I, for one, would be loth to encourage the idea that amidst domestic duties, however imperative, no place at all should be found for *some* work, however little, that is definitely undertaken for Christ. But our thoughts naturally turn to widows who are "widows indeed," to the unmarried who are living comparatively solitary lives, to grown-up daughters in a large family, and to the many who find life insipid for want of healthy interest. I set before me those, and within my knowledge they are not a few, who know little or nothing of the happiness that comes with making others happy, little or nothing of that which gives life its zest and value, little or nothing of the tonic of healthy work, and of the safeguard work provides against the manifold temptations of

an unoccupied life. The name of such is simply "legion." Look, on the other hand, at the *opportunities* which are in our stirring times being opened up which women might use, opportunities in which we may safely discern the energising movement and inspiration of the Holy Ghost! Take first the opportunity for those who are free to go where they please, and who live a comparatively unburdened life. What invaluable help might such render abroad, working in the diocese of a colonial bishop, acting under his immediate direction, strengthening his hands in his arduous, self-denying, and trying work! We know that there are not a few who have thus separated and consecrated themselves, and found in a colonial diocese varied scope for varied gifts. Take the Zenana Mission; what a field is there white to the harvest of Christian influence! Or if we turn to our wants at home, how many and varied are the opportunities of usefulness which sisterhoods and deaconesses' institutions have been so largely instrumental in developing. I say sisterhoods and deaconesses' institutions, because, provided the great motive from which work is taken up be the constraining love of Christ—the only motive in which we have a safeguard against the subtle idea of merit, and in which alone lies the secret of not being weary in well-doing—you must surely not override the

religious instincts or preferences of those devoted women who may feel called to enter a sisterhood with its vow, any more than you would not heartily accept the services of a devoted woman who prefers to work, free at any hour to relinquish her work. We cannot expect all to work any more than we expect all to think in the same groove. Leaving, however, this, as I cannot but think it might be left without prejudice to the great subject before us, look at some of the doors of usefulness open in our day to women! Shall I speak of the familiar and valued help of a good *district visitor*? How many more women of culture and leisure might take up this work, and find time—yes, consistently with domestic duties—to bring their influence to bear on the poor! How great the gain in our *Sunday schools*, when the children of the humbler classes are brought into close and endearing contact with one of gentle birth and Christian mind! Is not a *mothers' meeting* a golden opportunity for good? What shall I say of *sewing classes* for girls; classes for employés in mills and factories; classes for young men and women in our shops; classes for servants; classes for the aged? There is untold power for good in a well-conducted, devotional *Bible class*. We might have a superior kind of Bible-woman. Some women are particularly gifted in dealing with rough

men and uncouth lads. In such there is abundant scope in a class formed out of the husbands, sons, brothers of those who attend our mothers' meetings; or out of the loungers at the corners of streets, wherever, in fact, the waifs and strays of humanity may be found in lodging-houses and the bye-paths of erring life. A *friendly girls'* or *friendly young men's society* is an opportunity for evincing kindly interest in and helping the comparatively friendless. The day may come when women of refinement and good education will not be averse to the splendid sphere of usefulness which the *mistress of a national school* enjoys, thus helping insensibly to mould the minds of many who are not insensible to the quiet influence of a Christian gentlewoman. If she be physically equal to the arduous, but, oh! how blessed work of *nursing*, she has after due training no lack of opportunity in our hospitals and infirmaries. We know the revolution that has been brought about in our hospitals by their ministry who are so specially qualified for nursing:

"When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!"

What scope for women in reclaiming drunkards, and by forming classes for the reclaimed, helping them with loving vigilance to keep their pledge! What scope in prisons and penitentiaries! What scope amongst the fallen of her own sex, if in no

Pharisaic spirit of scorn, but in His "Who did not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax," she do her best to persuade an erring sister to turn her feet out of the paths of death! How many now sitting at ease, "careless daughters," if debarred from the more active forms of Church work, or physically unequal to much exertion, might pay an occasional visit to the *workhouse* in the parish, and thus light up the monotony of the wearied life; or start a *flower mission*, and encourage their country friends and wealthy neighbours to send some of the produce of their hot-houses that should find its way to a languishing bed of sickness! How many with gift of voice might consecrate it by softly singing a few sweet hymns to those on whose ear music falls with wondrous power of soothing, and thus beguile an hour of loneliness and pain! How many invalids, themselves chained down to a sickbed or sofa, could find scope for their taste or talent in little devices and drawings, which attached to a bouquet of flowers shall please the grateful invalid or some sick child. There is no one of these opportunities of usefulness, making more or less demand on the time, which is not to my knowledge being used elsewhere by many who after a "mission" have been brought to ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and who before found time hang heavily on their hands.

Opportunities are not wanting. The difficulty too often lies with husbands, and not unfrequently with parents. Many a wife would be doing much more for God, but for her husband's objections. Many a child would be ready to forsake all for Christ, if the parent would give ready consent. Why should not this consent be given? In these days when earnest workers, living witnesses, are so sorely needed, why might not many a parent, who has already dedicated a child to the Lord in baptism, have the yet further happiness of knowing that some one in the family of children is raised up to be a Dorcas or Phœbe? It would be so in many homes if parents realised that they had already dedicated their children to the Lord, and if prayer were more often heard in our Christian homes that God would use us all in this short life more and more to His glory. And why should not the Scriptural, primitive, and apostolic order of the deaconess be revived? Why should it not become a distinctly recognised centre in every diocese of spiritual power? The deaconess of Scripture has been almost swallowed up in the sisterhood and nunnery of modern days. Revive the order of deaconess, and we should do much towards encouraging and utilising material we cannot afford to waste. The Church of this country being both episcopal in her discipline and

parochial in her machinery, the deaconess would have her proper place, and from such an authorised and hallowed centre, she might be sent with prayer to some populous parish, not to the prejudice, exclusion, or disparagement of that help which every pastor should endeavour to find and use in his own parish, but as strictly supplemental to it. Woman's work thus consecrated would, as occasion required, be distributed over a diocese, and much power for good utilised. May we not earnestly press home on all whose lives are so conditioned that entire devotion to active service for Christ is not possible, that they should not therefore believe or acquiesce in the indolent notion that unless thus set apart by imposition of hands or by secret resolve nothing is left for them to do? Shall not such rather be moved to ask—What may I do? Shall not the lamp of holy zeal be kindled here to burn lightly and powerfully in many parishes from which we have come, and to which we are shortly returning? Shall not some godly resolve be made to take up some work, however humble, which will give the life-wearied a healthy interest in life, the listless some definite employment, to lift them out of the insipidity, frivolousness, and aimlessness which they themselves deplore; and shall we not all ask of God to teach us so to look on the woe and sadness of a

lost world as to see that this woe and sadness is the Master's call to work? and that of women this is true:

WOMAN'S COMMISSION.

ST. JOHN XX. 17.

WHEN upon Easter morn
The risen Saviour came
To Mary, as she kept
Beside His grave and wept,
He called her name.

Without one shade of doubt
Her heart replied, "My Lord!"
The mystery received
Of Life through Death achieved,
Her faith adored.

Unto that perfect faith
Christ gave at once employ;
Not to embrace His feet
In trance of rapture sweet—
But nobler joy,

To publish the great fruits
Self-sacrifice had borne—
Christ risen, rising still,
Proclaiming by His will
To hearts that mourn:

"Go, say that I ascend
Unto My Father's throne,
My Father, and *My* God,
Your Father, and *your* God,
Not Mine alone."

O Woman ! take thy stand
Upon this high position,
And faithfully hand on,
Till death itself is gone,
This great Commission.

The Apostolic line
No higher message bear ;
They, who the world must roam,
And thou, within thy home,
One glory share.

Teach it thy brother's soul,
By full unselfish love,
By consecrated youth,
By lips of stainless truth,
Hopes fixed above.

Throned on thy Husband's heart,
Whisper the message there
And let him all around,
Within home's guarded bound,
Breathe heavenly air.

And let the risen life
Beating within thy breast,
Cradle the sleeping boy
In a deep hush of joy—
Laid there to rest.

Yea, teach the saving truth
To every son of thine,
His passions to control,
To waken in his soul
The Life Divine.

And lonely ones as well,
With all your untold store
Of love still garnered in :
To spend it, Oh ! begin—
Give Christ your store.

Wherever human hearts,
In high or low estate,
Waste upon earth and sense
Hopes that should soar from thence,
Your work doth wait.

Behold it lies outspread,
In Christ's strength then arise ;
Fix on the misery round,
The sin that doth abound,
Pure fearless eyes.

To you the voice still speaks,
"Go, say that I ascend
Unto My Father's throne,
Yours, and not Mine alone,
His gift to send."

O Woman ! then work on
Beneath thy Saviour's eyes :
The joy is yet to come,
Thy peaceful perfect Home
Is in the skies.

*PRAYER FOR THE USE OF DISTRICT
VISITORS.*

O FATHER of mercies and GOD of all grace, in Whose hands are the hearts and souls of men, pour down upon the district entrusted to me the healthful dew of Thy blessing. Go with me into whatsoever house I go, and endue me with grace and wisdom to speak a word in due season. Make me the humble instrument in Thy hands of winning souls. Have mercy on all who are living a careless and sinful life, and convert them to Thyself. Succour the tempted. Comfort the sick and sorrowful. Give Thy pardon and peace to the dying. Bless all who minister for Thee in this parish. Prosper every design that is consistent with Thy will for the spiritual and temporal welfare of Thy redeemed people ; and grant that seeking here on earth to glorify Thee and to increase the Redeemer's kingdom, I may come to those unspeakable joys which Thou hast prepared for all who unfeignedly love and serve Thee, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.

*PRAYER FOR A MOTHERS
MEETING.*

ALMIGHTY FATHER, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, prosper, we pray Thee, with Thy blessing this our meeting, undertaken in Thy name and for the well-being of these Thy servants. Make it in Thy hands an opportunity for good. May these women here present be encouraged in habits of thrift, sobriety, industry, and godliness, working with their hands the thing that is good. Give to them the grace of contentment with their lot. Keep them from all sinful repining and murmuring against Thy will. Grant that the reading of Thy Holy Word may be blessed by Thy Spirit to their souls; and that some word spoken here may be as seed sown in an honest and good heart to bring forth fruit to Thy praise.

Look down with an eye of compassion and tender mercy on these Thy servants. Thou, O Lord, knowest their circumstances and condition. Their cares, anxieties, temptations, difficulties, are not hid from Thee. Suit Thy Grace to their

necessities. Enable them to cast their every care upon Thee, Who carest for us. Look upon their families, their homes, their children. Convert the unconverted. Reclaim the erring. Recall with Thy loving voice any dear to them who are yet far from Thee ; and so bless these Thy servants whom Thou hast created and redeemed, that they may be of good and blessing to all with whom they daily live. Above all, give them so to know their Saviour, and so to believe in Him, that believing, they may have life through His name.

Hear us for His sake, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be ascribed everlasting praise, world without end. AMEN.

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